

ANNALS  
*of*  
WOMELSDORF, PENNA.  
*and the*  
TULPEHOCKEN  
COMMUNITY



# Annals of Womelsdorf, Pa. and Community

1723—1923

HISTORY'S YARD-STICK  
*for* TWO-HUNDRED YEARS

By REV. P. C. CROLL, D. D.

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"Lest we forget! Lest we forget!"

—Kipling

"Posterity will not forget his services."

—Pres. Geo. Washington at Conrad Weiser's grave

"I like to see a man proud of the place in which he lives."

—Abraham Lincoln

**OTHER BOOKS BY THE SAME  
AUTHOR**

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Tributes to Luther, 1884.

Golden Wedding Ring, 1887.

Historic Landmarks of the Lebanon  
Valley, 1895.

Art Work of Lebanon County, Pa.,  
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Bible Quiz, 1897.

Bible Gems, 1908.

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Slumberland and Slumber Songs, 1917.

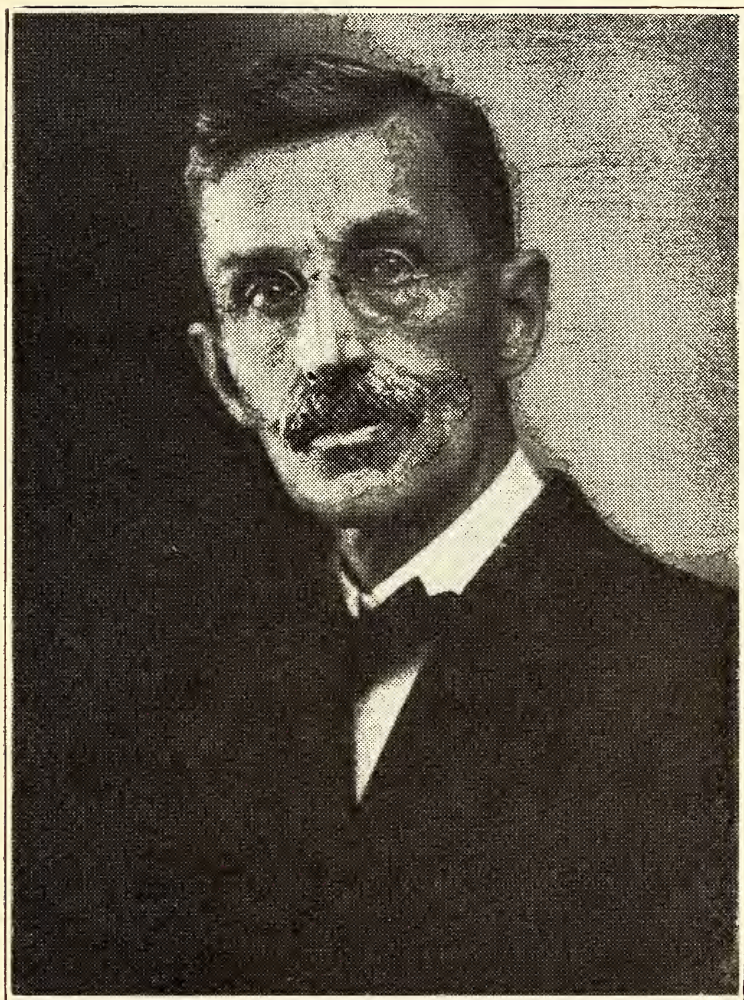
**Translations from the German**

Jewish Artisan Life (Delitzsch), 1884.

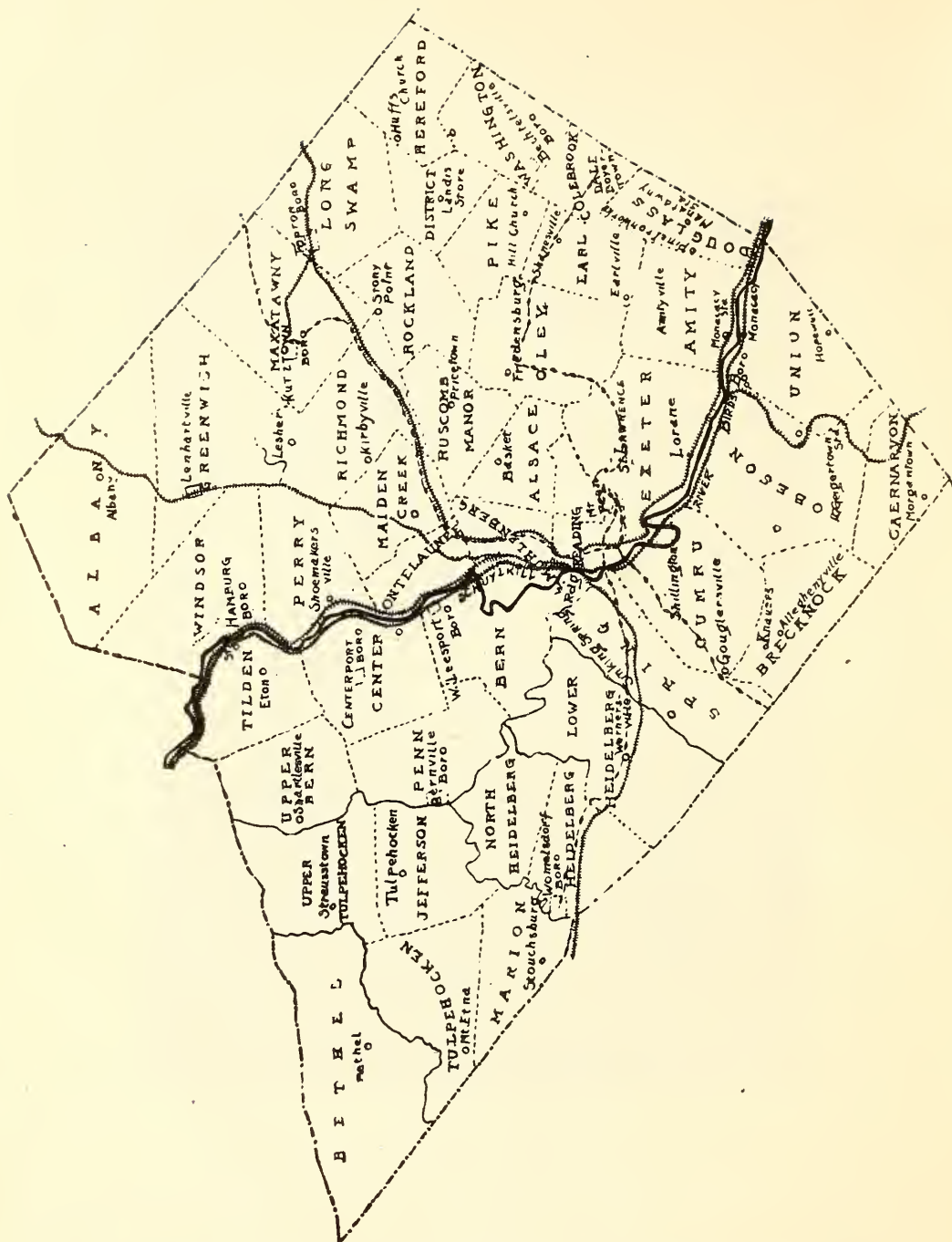
Jesus and Hillel (Delitzsch), 1884.

Alli, or Blessed are the Merciful  
(Hoffman), 1886.





**The Author**



Map of Berks Country—The Heart of God's Country



# ANNALS OF WOMELSDORF AND COMMUNITY

## Chapter I.

### INTRODUCTION

This reprint in book form is made at the urgent request of many who read the original articles as they appeared in the columns of the **Reading Eagle** from September, 1922, to February, 1923. A few necessary alterations appear and the illustrations are added.

For the many kind words spoken and appreciative letters written the author is very grateful. He also acknowledges the kind courtesy of the authors of "The Story of Berks County," for the use of a number of cuts here reproduced.

\*Next year it will be 200 years since the first white colony of settlers began the march of civilization at the Tulpehocken in the now famous and charming Lebanon Valley. It is 25 years earlier in its beginnings than Reading, which will celebrate its 175th anniversary next fall. This Tulpehocken community will then be two full centuries old and should celebrate its bicentennial.

#### **In Ministry 42 Years.**

The present writer here began his public ministry in 1879, and now, in the spring of 1921, after 42 years of an active pastorate, removed

hither from Illinois to spend his remaining days in professional retirement. He has again identified himself with this historic community and desires to write a series of articles of a historical, industrial and biographical character descriptive of this community, which he trusts may awaken and stimulate the spirit of local pride, of community interest and of a purpose to punctuate the end of a two-century run of life and activity here by means of a fitting home-coming and historical celebration next spring.

He has chosen for the first chapter the title:

### "BEAUTIFUL FOR SITUATION"

Womelsdorf is located in the heart of God's country. It is possible that God might have created a finer and a richer landscape than the Lebanon Valley of Pennsylvania, but it is quite certain He never did. At least not in America.

#### **No Portion Barred.**

And this assertion does not except any portion of our great country, North and South, East and West, most of which its author has seen. The great prairie states of the Middle West can boast of a rich cereal-producing soil; portions of California are noted for their citrus fruit products and their climatic loveliness and scenic beauty; the Willamette Valley of Oregon is widely and justly famous for its fine apples, pears, plums and other fruits; the western and central, or lake, segment of New York state, known as the grape belt,

is reported by one of its dwellers as "the finest country lying out of doors;" but none of these excel the Lebanon Valley for richness of soil, variety of products, beautiful, undulating landscapes and architectural improvements. The writer knows, for he has seen all the others and has traveled over almost every section of the more than 1,000 square miles included in this valley, which lies between the Blue Mountains on the north and the South Mountain range on the south, an average of 20 miles in width, and stretches from the Schuylkill on the east to the Susquehanna on the west, a distance of 54 miles.

Within this domain are included the western half of Berks, all of Lebanon and the greater portion of Dauphin counties.

\* Written in 1922.



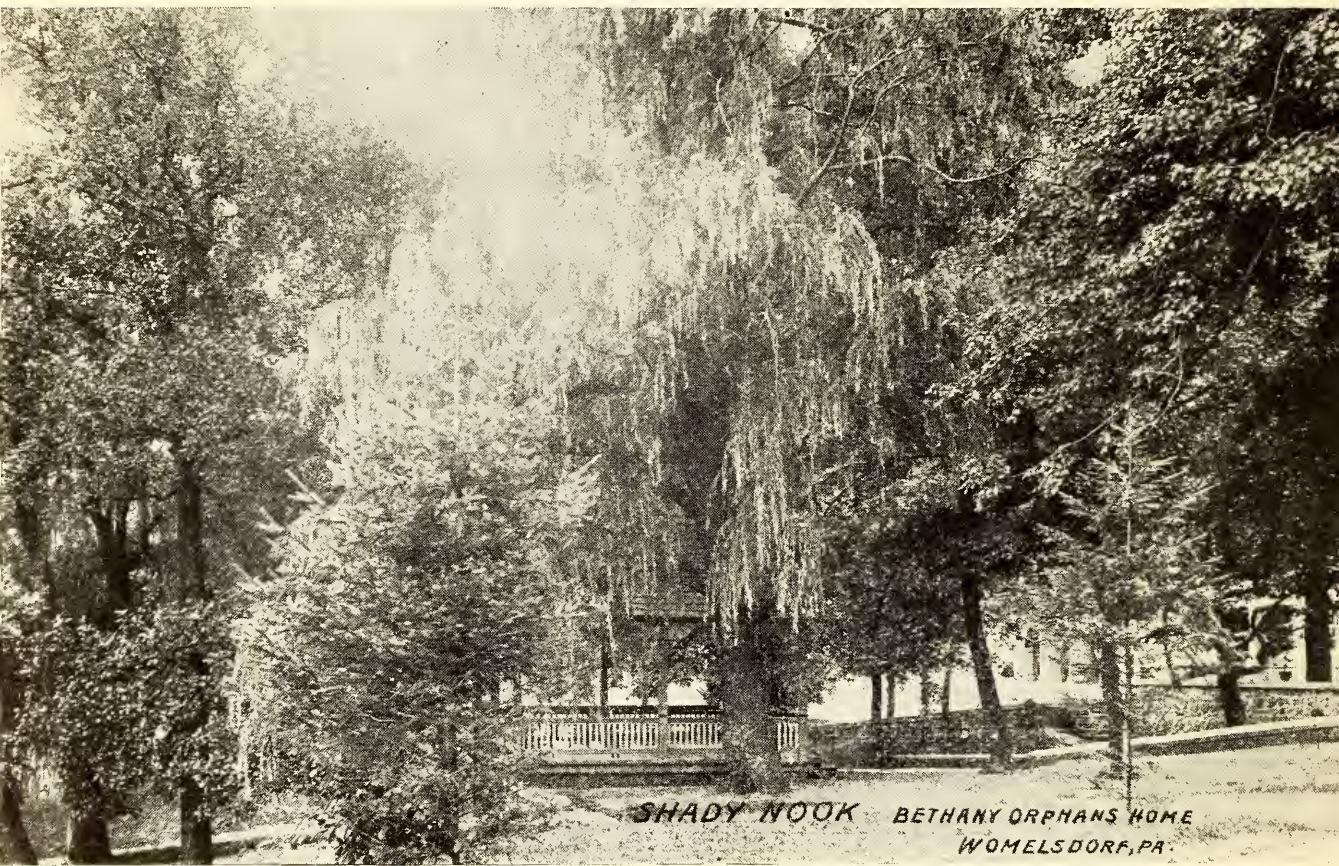
**Pastoral Loveliness.**

Tens of thousands of travelers have been carried by the iron horse through its entire length, stretching between the cities of Reading and Harrisburg, and have been inspired into eloquent exclamations over its pastoral loveliness and panoramic beauty. Now, since the automobile has become an almost universal possession and the William Penn Highway has been constructed through its longitudinal center, connecting these two terminal cities and threading on its line the chief towns and villages which are dotting this valley, as beads or brilliants are strung on a lady's necklace, other tens of thousands of observers from this

other, until miles away this rural sea strikes against its bordering mountain promontories or else breaks itself up in green undulations of woodland.

**A Midway Location.**

Womelsdorf is situated on this highway, midway between the cities of Reading and Lebanon, about 14 miles from either city, in the extreme western portion of Berks county, near the border line of Lebanon county. North of it in the valley nestle the towns of Bernville, Rehrersburg, Millersburg, Frystown and Strausstown. East of it lie Robesonia, Wernersville, Sinking Spring and the western suburban



and other states do not miss a Sunday or holiday during the spring, summer and autumn months in which to enjoy the landscape of this empire of fertile and well-kept farms, and these home centers, the abode of scenic beauty, of domestic peace and comfort and of agricultural luxury and plenty. Seen from some elevation, the valley lies like a vast sea of bucolic loveliness. On and on the billowy fields—crad in garments of wheat and clover, corn and oats, tobacco and potatoes—are rolling, one farm lashing against an-

hamlets of Reading, the chief of which is Wyomissing. Immediately south of the town stretches the highest barrier of the South Mountain Ridge, beyond which lie the historic towns of Ephrata, Lititz, Manheim and the city of Lancaster. On the west are situated Stouchsburg, the three history-laden Tulpehocken Church communities, Sheridan, Newmanstown, Richland and Myerstown, seven miles beyond which is enthroned Lebanon city, the proud and progressive queen of the valley, begirt with a girdle of iron



and steel industries and with a crown of copper upon her Cornwallian brow.

Womelsdorf is surrounded by many college towns. Within 20 miles are located four denominational colleges of high rank and long years of history. Within a radius of 100 miles are located 17 colleges and universities,\* 10 theological seminaries,† five state normal schools,‡ five women's colleges and a number of flourishing business colleges.

### A Belt of Iron and Steel.

Womelsdorf is also environed by a belt of iron and steel plants. Besides the more than half a dozen manufacturing industries of this class in each of the cities of Reading and Lebanon, and those of Cornwall, its inhabitants never cease by day to see the smoke arise from the furnace stacks of Sheridan and Robeson, and by night they often watch the lurid glow of the sky, upon which are reflected the fiery cinder dumps of these furnaces—the former two and the latter but three miles away. Grist and saw mills, stone quarries and old forges punctuate the scenery along its water courses, while high upon every prominent hillcrest old, historic rural churches point their tall fingers toward heaven.

Herds of Jerseys and Holsteins graze in the meadows and famous breeds of draught horses plow the broad upland acres or draw the lumbering Conestoga "ships of the prairie" (farm wagons), except where these are superseded by the gasoline-propelled tractor and the truck. The highways are free of weeds, well built and well maintained and the farms are richly productive and models of agricultural order. Springs and streams abound in all this region, and the early settlers built their first log cabins along their banks, upon which sites have since arisen mansions of luxury and comfort, while these same meandering streams, like Tennyson's Brook, keep up their flow and their bucolic murmurings as they did when their ancestors first settled beside them 200 years ago.

### In "God's Country."

Hence Womelsdorf is on the map of "God's Country," and near the

geographical center of this modern Canaan. The appellation of "God's Country" is no misnomer, for He seemed to have held it in reserve for those persecuted and tried and defrauded children of His, who 200 years ago were the fugitives of a cruel exile, prayerfully seeking a new home where peace and quiet, love and religion might once more abide, unhindered by hateful bigotry and cruel tyranny. Like the Israelites of old, who had left Egypt for Canaan, or the Pilgrim Fathers who, a century earlier, had found refuge on Plymouth Rock, so these Palatinate pilgrims of the Tulpehocken settlement had fled from the Rhine country of Germany and, after about 15 years of persecution, flight, hardships, dangers, sufferings and frauds, landed as the pioneers, the first white settlers, in this newly opened section of Penn's colony in 1723. To their descendants of the sixth to the eighth generation, and some newcomers, has been handed down this rich inheritance. "Oh! that men would praise the Lord for His goodness and for His wonderful works to the children of men!" So sang the sweet singer of Israel long ago. The great Lincoln has said: "I like to see a man proud of the place in which he lives," and we hope by these sketches to make the dwellers of this community still prouder. We remember Sir Walter Scott's fine outburst of patriotism in his oft-quoted lines from "Marmion," beginning:

"Breathes there a man with soul so dead  
Who never to himself has said  
This is my own, my native land,"

and we trust a historic picture, or review, of this community's life may help present dwellers to think gratefully of these rich gifts of environment and inheritance and speak of them to others.

"Lest we forget! Lest we forget!"

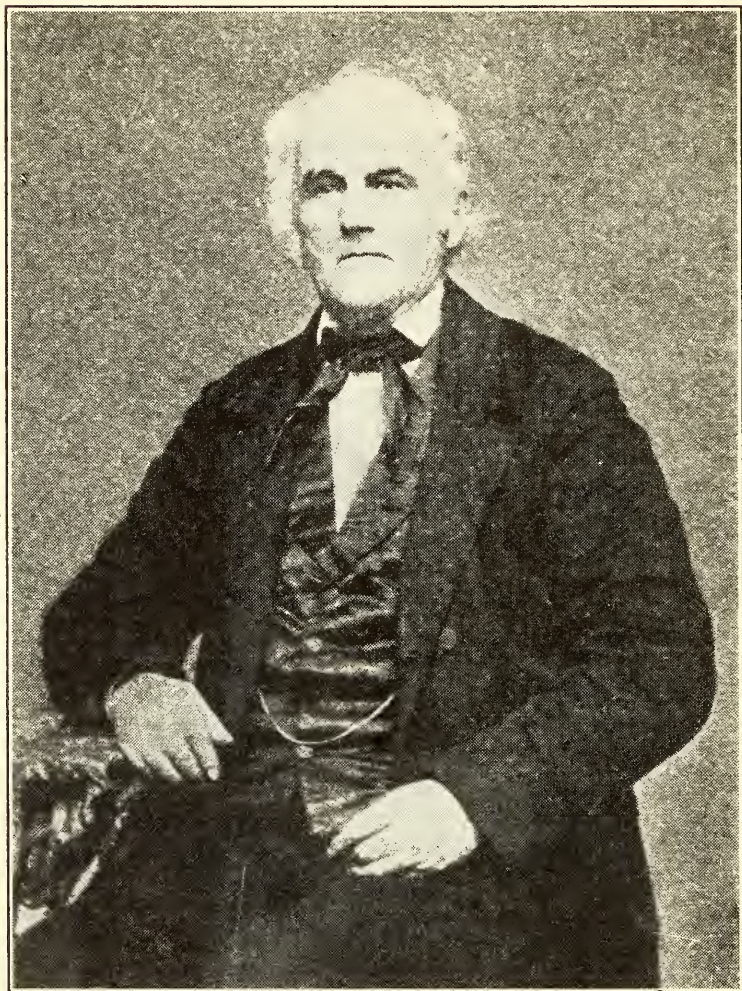
### References.

\*Princeton University, University of Pennsylvania, Swarthmore, Swedenborgian, Ursinus, Perkiomen Seminary, Lafayette, Lehigh, Muhlenberg, Schuylkill, Franklin and Marshall, Albright, Lebanon Valley, Gettysburg, Dickinson, and Selinsgrove.

†Princeton, Swedenborg, Episcopal Divinity, Mt. Airy, Franklin and Marshall, Ursinus, Schuylkill Seminary, Gettysburg, Selinsgrove, and Moravian.

‡Stroudsburg, Kutztown, Millersville, Shippenburg, and Bloomsburg.

‡Bryn Mawr, Moravian, Cedar Croft, Irving, and Wilson.



Rev. Thomas H. Leinbach, D. D.



## Chapter II.

### BRIEF HISTORY

The story of the Palatines, who founded the Tulpehocken settlement in the wilds of Penn's woods, the first white colony in the Lebanon Valley, has oft been told. Suffice it to be repeated in brief form here.

The German dwellers of the upper Rhine country, on either side of the stream, in the 17th century, were greatly increased when, in 1685, the treaty of Nantes was revoked, which let loose hostility to spend itself in persecution. Every form of fury was employed to reduce the Huguenot population of France by way of murder and exile. Many fled to Germany, but were safe only there for a brief period.

Meanwhile many were intermarried with these German neighbors, when again the hounds of war were let loose and French persecution followed across the state border, and with musket and spear, firebrand and sword, they invaded the Palatine countries, murdered the inhabitants, burned their towns and villages and drove thousands of refugees to another exile. These fled to England for protection. There were at one time tens of thousands of these refugees tented in the crowded streets and parks of London.

#### BIGGEST EXODUS.

It was during the year 1709 that the largest German exodus to England took place. By the fall of that year not less than 15,000 of these exiles had made their flight. There was untold suffering and privation among them. Their condition came to the notice of Queen Anne, then the sovereign of Great Britain, and she made preparations to send shiploads of them to her colonies across the Atlantic.

Accordingly ten vessels were fitted out in the autumn of that year to carry at least 3,000 of these unfortunates to America's shores, where they might enjoy government protection, political peace and a large degree of religious freedom. Like the English Pilgrims of the previous century, these German exiles and their successors who came in the next five decades, through the port

of Philadelphia principally, and numbering in all about 50,000 souls, settling principally in Eastern Pennsylvania, became the political backbone in building up the great commonwealth of Pennsylvania, as they became, with the Puritans of New England, the rock strata of the church of America, with its fundamental platform of freedom of faith and untrammelled rights of worship. It was as much a religious immigration as that of the Pilgrims and Puritans of Plymouth Rock.

Says Prof. W. J. Hinke: "From the religious point of view it was a mighty immigration of Reformed and Lutheran inhabitants of the Palatinate and neighboring districts. The two great German denominations conspicuous in the Reformation were the leaders of this movement."

#### INCLUDED TWO CLERGYMEN.

Among these 3,000 immigrants of 1709-10 were two ministers, the Lutheran clergyman, Joshua Kocherthal, and the Reformed minister, John Frederick Haeger. The latter was appointed as the missionary among the Reformed contingent by the London Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, and on Dec. 20, 1709, just before sailing, received Episcopal ordination at the hands of the lord bishop of London. From his letters to this London Society and found in the letter-books of the society, it is shown that he felt himself under obligation due to his ordination and financial assistance by the society "to transport this people (his Reformed flock) into the Church of Christ as by law established in England (the Protestant Episcopal)."

But he finds that "the Lutheran minister in this country (Justus Falkner) had made already a separation and administered the holy sacrament to such of his confession as arrived in the ships before ours, persuading them that they ought to stick to that, in which they were bred and born; which (Rev.) Kocherthal, after his arrival, confirmed also, inasmuch that the separation between the Reformed and Luther-

ans is fully made." Thus a side glimpse is furnished us of their very earliest beginnings in America of these two now great religious denominations.

#### SETTLED IN MONTGOMERY.

Who were these three clergymen ministering to our early German forbears? We can answer the question. Rev. Justus Falckner was a German, whose father and grandfathers were Lutheran ministers, and who after graduating from the University of Halle, Germany, came to America in 1700, ten years before this flood of immigration, in which were included all of the first settlers of the Tulpehocken region. He settled in Montgomery county where a vast region is still bearing his name as the Falckner Swamp section where a number of German Lutheran settlers had preceded him among whom he was at first laboring.

But when a call came to go to New York, to take up the work of Rev. Andrew Rudman, a Swedish pastor, then serving the Dutch Lutheran Church, of New York city, whose failing health prevented continuance of his labors, he (Falckner) accepted and on Nov. 24, 1702, was ordained in the Gloria Dei (Old Swedes) Church, of Philadelphia, by the Swedish Lutheran ministers, then in charge of this extensive Swedish Lutheran diocese, Revs. Rudman, Bjoerk and Sandel.

This was the first ordination in America of a German Lutheran minister and it is noteworthy to observe that he, a German, received ordination at the hands of Swedish pastors to serve a Dutch Lutheran congregation in New York city. Those early Lutherans were then as the present church, polyglot.

Rev. Falckner began his work in New York on Dec. 2, 1703, and continued to serve faithfully until his death, 20 years later, in 1723. Thus he was on hand when there came to New York harbor this great refugee influx of his countrymen and was ready to oppose Rev. Haeger, the Reformed missionary, laboring among his people in the interest of the church of England. This stand, and that of his coreligionist and for a time colaborer, Rev. Kocherthal, which position also must have had its influence upon many of the Reformed people, accounts for it, in part at least, that the pioneers of the Tulpehocken valley, erected east of Stouchsburg in 1727, and at Host, possibly a few years later, Lutheran and Reformed churches, respectively, instead of Episcopalian.

#### FIRST CHURCH IN 1727.

Rev. Falckner's successor, at Falckner's Swamp, Rev. Henckel, probably informed of this settlement on the Tulpehocken, by his predecessor, made journeys to this community during their first years of pioneer life, preached to them, probably in Leonhardt Rieth's or Hans Heinrich Zeller's log cabin, and advised them to build their first church edifice, which occurred in 1727.

But we are running ahead of our story. These German immigrants of New York, who had boarded their vessels at Plymouth, England, in January, 1710, were detained at that harbor for 18 weeks and arrived in New York only on June 10, soon left the city for the interior of the colony, some remaining, of course, and identifying themselves with Rev. Falckner's Church; others scattering over New Jersey, Long Island and the shores of Long Island Sound, while the majority were taken up the Hudson by Pastor Kocherthal to Quasek Creek and Thanksamer, on the western hillslope of the Hudson, where now stands the thriving city of Newburgh-on-the-Hudson. Lands were leased to some of them by the provincial authorities for the moderate rental of one peppercorn annually, while most were set to work raising flax and burning turpentine to pay off their passage money. Their terms were hard and the title deeds to their lands found fraudulent, so that a few years later they moved farther north to the Mohawk and Schoharie valleys, where they supposed better conditions were offered them.

But again hardship and disappointment overtook them. After long and vexatious litigation and much personal annoyance and suffering, they heard of William Penn's invitation for the settlement of a newly-acquired territory in the back woods at the southern base of the Kittatinny Mountains. The valleys drained by the Tulpehocken and the Swatara were thrown open for settlement, which now constitute a part of the famous Lebanon Valley.

#### TRAVELED ON RAFTS.

Accordingly, in the spring of 1723, 60 families of these Schoharie and Mohawk German settlers resolved to move to these parts. They constructed rafts, on which they floated their wives and children, together with their household goods, from the head waters of the north branch of the Susquehanna in Central New York to the mouth of Swatara Creek in Pennsylvania (where now Middle-



town is located), 10 miles below Harrisburg. From thence they worked their way up this stream until they came opposite the Tulpehocken Valley. From this place (probably Greble, Lebanon county), they crossed the gravel ridge where Mt. Etna is now located and descended down the eastern slopes to the Tulpehocken.

The leaders of this party were the Rieth brothers (Reed), Leonhardt and Johannes, Hans Heinrich Zeller, Johannes and Freiderich Schaeffer, Sebastian Fischer, Johann Adam Lesch, Gottfried Fidler, Jacob Loewengot (Livingood), and others. The center of this settlement was where the Mill Creek empties into the Tulpehocken, east of the present Stouchsburg, near which junction Leonhardt Rieth built his home and also a grist mill, which he operated until his accidental death in 1747. Near his home was erected, in 1727, the first church of the settlement, in the erection of which the Rieths, Schaeffers, Zellers and others took a leading part.

#### FIRST ROAD IN 1727.

From this "meeting house of the Lutherans to the Boone meeting house of the Quakers in Oley township" was laid out the first road of the settlement in 1727. A chart prepared and owned by C. I. Lindemuth, of Stouchsburg, shows the location of these 60 families of first settlers. It stretched from the present eastern limits of Womelsdorf to almost where Myerstown is now located, and from Newmanstown to near Rehrersburg. Each family took up considerable land holdings, for it was both bountiful and cheap.

But while these settlers came with faith, hope, courage and piety, they came without a Gospel minister. Revs. Kocherthal and Haeger had both remained with the larger remnant of their flocks in New York. In Newburgh, Rev. Kocherthal was instrumental in leading his followers to the erection of a substantial hexagonal edifice which long served its purpose as the (Lutheran) Church of the Palatines and was still in use we presume, when nearby Gen. Washington took official leave of his army after the battles of the Revolution in 1781. (See *The Pennsylvania German*, Vol. 111, No. 2, p. 87.) Here he had a maintenance and support from the 500 acres of glebe land, which were held in the name of the trustees of the church, for the benefit of the Lutheran pastor.

#### ENTRIES FROM WEISER JOURNAL.

He seems to have extended his parish from the regions of the Schoharie and Mohawk valleys, when the second migration of 150 families took place thither in 1713, for we find allusions to his successor's ministry, and that of Rev. Haeger in the private journal of Conrad Weiser. Says he, in giving an account of his own family: "In 1720, while my father was in England, I married my Ann Eve, and was given her in marriage by the Rev. John Frederick Heger (Haeger), Reformed clergyman, on the 22d of November, in my father's house in Schohary.



Conrad Weiser.

"In 1722, the 7th of September, my son, Philip, was born, and was baptized by John Bernhard von Duehren, Lutheran clergyman; his sponsors were Philip Brown (Braun) and wife."

So continuing entries of baptisms of later children born shows that all these pastors of Livingstone Manor (Newburgh) on the Hudson. Revs. Haeger, Von Duehren and Birkenmeyer, the last two Lutheran, officiated also in Schoharie. Rev. Von Duehren even visited a few times these Tulpehocken settlers during the first years of their settlement in Pennsylvania, and ministered to them.

#### TROD TULPEHOCKEN BANKS.

By way of parenthesis, it is interesting to relate that all the parties involved in the baptism of Conrad Weiser's first-born child on the banks of the Schoharie, trod also later the banks of the Tulpehocken,

the parents as leading settlers, the child as boy and growing youth and influential man and warrior, the sponsors as next neighbors of the Weisers on the Tulpehocken and the officiating clergyman as a visiting and ministering missionary. All but the minister lived and died here and are here interred. The parents, Conrad and Ann Eve Weiser, are buried in the private burial plot on the Conrad Weiser homestead just east of Womelsdorf. Philip Weiser, the son, died in 1761, a year after his illustrious father, at the age of 38 years, and lies buried in the Rieth (Reed) cemetery, east of Stouchsburg, while the sponsors settled next west of Weiser's homestead, on the northern bank of the Tulpehocken, the farm now owned by LeRoy R. Valentine, where just recently I found their neglected graves. In a field, sloping towards the back, Tulpehocken roadway and the creek, without mound, or the protection of any enclosure, are standing two thick sandstones as markers of their burial. It must have been the family burial plot and years ago was possibly fenced in. Now, if the grazing Dutch Holsteins, or the English Jerseys, that must often in their browsing come upon these stones, can read German, this is what they can yet clearly decipher:

#### INSCRIPTION ON GRAVES.

##### ALHIER

Ruhet Unser  
Vater, Philip  
Braun. Seines  
Alters, 74  
Jahr. Starb  
Den 10ten  
August, 1767.

##### ALHIER

Ruhet Unsere  
Mutter, Elizab.  
M a g d e l e n a,  
Frau Von P.  
Braun. Alter,  
63 Jahr. Starb  
September,  
1760.

But we have digressed and must return to the thread of our story.

In 1729, about a dozen more families followed the 60 families of 1723 in the same route and manner and for the same purpose of permanent settlement from Schoharie to the Tulpehocken. Among these was Conrad Weiser with his family of wife and four small children. He settled on a thousand acres of land about half a mile to the east of the present Womelsdorf, and soon became the political and religious leader of the colony and rapidly developed into a county leader and official and even rose to be a noted figure in the country's development

during its colonial period. The little stone house he erected near a never-failing spring, about the year 1730, is still standing, in which he and his family lived for 30 years, where Indian chiefs, colonial governors, church bishops and superintendents visited him, from which fireside the illustrious Rev. Henry Melchoir Muhlenberg, the patriarch of the American Lutheran Church, led as bride Weiser's eldest daughter, Anna Maria, from which nuptial union has sprung perhaps the most distinguished family in the annals of Pennsylvania, if not in all America. Here Conrad Weiser died on July 13, 1760, and in a little burial plot by the side of this pioneer home he lies buried. Statesmen and historians and even President George Washington, the father of his country, himself, have stood with doffed hats by this grave in veneration and esteem. The latest respect shown was on Sept. 8 of this year, when a few hundred of the members and friends of the Historical Society of Berks County visited it.

#### LIVE IN OLD HOMESTEADS.

Many of the old homesteads are still in the hands of descendants of the original settlers, some from the sixth to the eighth generation. Instead of the humble cabins reared by their forebears, however, the sites are occupied by commodious and imposing rural mansions. Only a few of the first dwellings remain, as the Weiser home of about 1730, the Zeller home and fortification, or house of refuge, erected in 1745, and a few others in the Mill Creek Valley. An occasional outbuilding of log, as spring houses and artisan shops, and usually tile or straw-covered, are still standing to illustrate the architecture of those days.

The march of time brought influx of new populations, while the original colony kept naturally increasing. Changes came, new communities were opened up and populated, new churches were erected, new villages and town centers were founded, new roads opened, new industries established, new schools erected and, with the growth of the country, new orders of government established; new institutions founded and new times and new customs constantly replacing the old. This march of progress has in time moved also, up and down this valley. Turnpikes, macadamized and concrete state highways, a canal, steam railroad and trolley lines have been built, progressive industries and manufactories have been erected and un-



dreamed of educational advances have been made throughout this entire valley.

### TWO DOZEN CHURCHES.

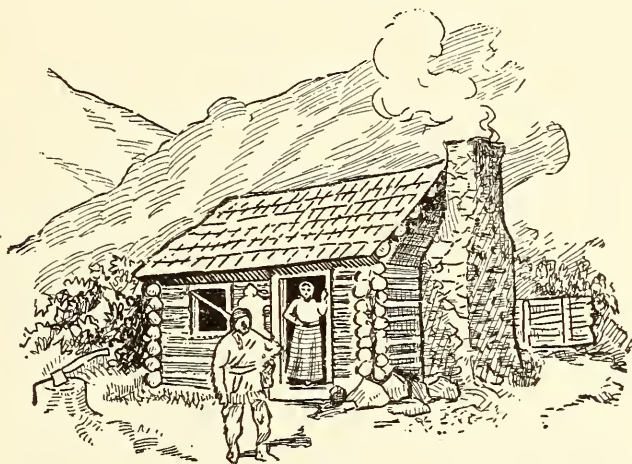
In the district from which the first church of the valley (the Rieth's or Zion Tulpehocken Lutheran) summoned its worshippers, at least two dozen congregations now assemble each Lord's Day for worship. The rude parochial school of the Rieths, Lesches, Anspachs, Loevenguths, Walborns, Fischers, Fidlers, Zellers and Lankes was displaced by the public free school and the pay academy, while now the high school and the college have come to supply and supplement the mental training of that distant day.

Only the speech has been too stubborn to yield entirely to the innovation. The German vernacular which

from south to north and north to south, the following indicates, in a rough way, who were next neighbors in the original settlement of this Pennsylvania German colony:

Conrad Weiser, Philip Braun, Adam Lesch, Peter Schaeffer, Nicholas Kinzer, Jacob Kapp, Conrad Zug (?), Christopher Kayser, Johannes Rohrer, Jacob Schaeffer and Michael Krise.

The above all settled in what was Plumpton Manor, including the land between the Rieth's Church on the west beyond Womelsdorf eastward, and running on the southern boundary almost where the William Penn highway now is built and crosses these two lines north and south. North of the Tulpehocken and west of this Plumpton Manor lay the Fells Manor, in which were located the original homesteads of



An Original Settler's Cabin

the forebears brought with them from the banks of the Rhine, is still spoken without many changes by the rural, and by some town folk, over the hills of Heidelberg, Berks county, as it was in the Rhenish Palatinate before persecution drove these gentle, honest and religious German dwellers from their long peaceful homes along the Rhine, to this "God's country" of America, along the Tulpehocken.

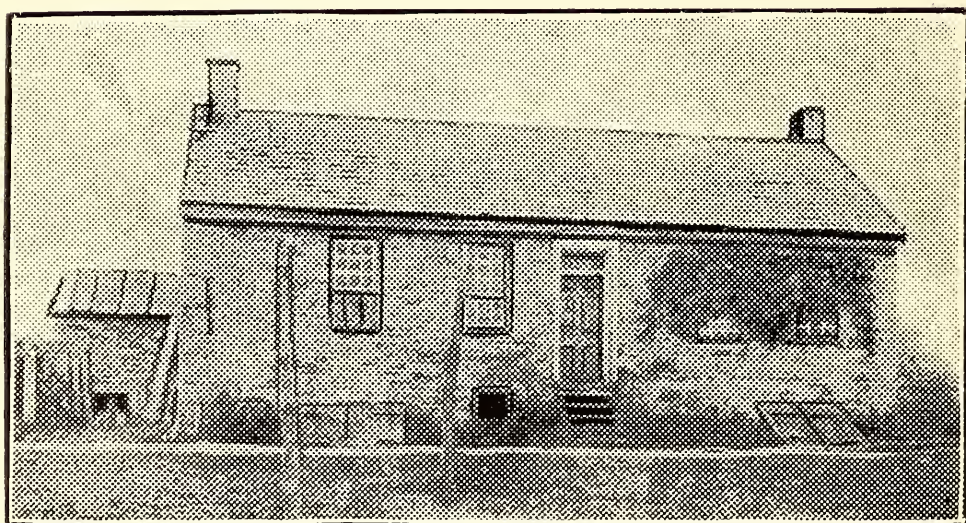
### LIST OF PIONEERS.

Following is a list of the names of the pioneers of the Tulpehocken settlement, as found in Lindenmuth's chart of first settlers. (See the Pennsylvania German, Vol. V, No. 4, p. 190):

Beginning in the East and naming settlers westward as far as the present Myerstown, and going from the southern extremity by the Mill Creek northward as far as the present Rehrersburg and thus naming the homesteads up and down,

Johann Loenhardt Rieth, Michael Schmidt, Abraham Laucks, Peter Zerbe, — Bentz, — Zerbe, Hans Boyer, Adam Stupp, Herman Walborn, Casper Rieth, Michael Ernst, George Unruh, Lawrence Fischer, Sebastian Fischer, Balthus Anspach, — Felger, Hans George Leigner, — Deck, Peter Liebo, Nicholas Weyant, Christopher Weiser, Frederick Winter, Christopher Shump, Leonard Anspach, Franz Wenrich, Jacob Clehberg, Matthias Minnich, Peter Schell, Martin Batdorff, Conrad Goldmann, Adam Schnetz, Johann Keller, George Rieth, Christian Lower, Adam Diffenbach, Jonas Kitzmiller, George Lesch, Christian Walborn and George Zeh (See).

South of the Tulpehocken and along the Mill Creek were Jacob Kapp, Martin Heckendorf, Heinrich Zeller, Nicholas Rieth, Ludwig Blum, Leonhardt Holstein, Francis Brossman, Jacob Lederman, Isaiah Cushwa, Michael Weiser and Adam Diffenbach.



**Conrad Weiser's Homestead—Built about 1730**



## Chapter III.

## IMPORTANT DATES AND DATA

The year 1923, while it will mark the 175th anniversary of the founding of the City of Reading, marks the bi-centennial of Berks county's first settlement as a colony in the Tulpehocken Valley, with the exception of a small colony of Swedes, who had pushed their way up the Schuylkill Valley from the Delaware, a few years prior, and probably a few lone Quaker pioneers, who had driven their stakes of advance settlement into the southeastern portion of what is now Berks county, a year or two in advance of this Tulpehocken settlement as a colony, the oldest permanent occupation of this county's territory.

Under the changing phases of "the Tulpehocken Region," "the Lutheran Meeting House on the Tulpehocken," "Weisers," and later "Middletown" and Womelsdorf," this then advance post of Caucasian civilization, has been officially known for these two centuries on governmental records, charts and first maps of Berks county, then parts of Chester and Philadelphia counties, and, from 1729 to 1752, as a part of Lancaster county, but since the latter date as Berks county.

**LAID OUT IN 1762.**

Womelsdorf itself was only laid out as a town-center in 1762. It was founded by John Womelsdorf, the husband of one of Conrad Weiser's granddaughters, and located on the highway of travel between Easton, on the Delaware, and John Harris' ferry, on the Susquehanna, and between Philadelphia and Reading, on the Schuylkill, and Shamokin (the present Sunbury, Pa.), at the junction of the two branches of the Susquehanna River. It is situated on what was originally part of Jacob Sheffer's and Conrad Weiser's lands. It has borne different names and about a decade ago, a strong effort was made to change it to the more euphonious and historical name of "Weiserton," but it failed of success, and it is now probable that the present name will be permanent. But whatever its name it cannot alter its history, which is both quite illus-

trious and indelibly engraved on the tablets of old Berks' chronology. It is here really where Berks county history began. Before there was a Reading or Kutztown, a Hamburg or a Boyertown, a Birdsboro or a Fleetwood, a Topton or a Shillington, a Wernersville or a Wyomissing, a Leesport or a Pottstown, there was a "Tulpehocken Settlement" and a place on Pennsylvania's early map, known as "Weiser's."

**A RIVAL OF READING.**

Hither all early trails and highways led. At Conrad Weiser's homestead was enacted much of the early church and political history of this section. Here concentrated the early settlers, many Indian chiefs, Christian missionaries—among them the church fathers and founders of half a dozen denominations—and the government officials and land agents of William Penn's colony for three decades. At the beginning of last century the town had become a significant trade center, whose stores then rivalled those of Reading.

It is, therefore, not a boastful motive that prompts the writer in recording here for convenient reference the salient events that mark the uninterrupted onward flow of the community. Chronology, which, like that of its musically, Indian-named stream—the Tulpehocken—or like Tennyson's "brook," has flowed on these 200 years and will probably flow on forever, while men will come and men shall go. The following pages of this chapter and the next will put the outlying facts of the planting, growth and history of this old, now modern 20th century town, in chronological order:

**1723 — FIRST WHITE SETTLEMENT.**

A brief history of this settlement has been given in the foregoing chapter. The removal of 60 German families from the Schoharie and Mohawk valleys of New York during this year was on invitation of the Penn proprietaries, who had just before by treaty agreements

with the Indians received possession of these back lands, south of the Kittatinny mountain range and east of the Susquehanna, and had by advertisement, invited settlers into these parts. The section covered by the present counties of Bucks, Montgomery, Chester and Lancaster was well dotted with earlier settlements, and the constant stream of German and Swiss and later Scotch-Irish immigration was just beginning to wash up the Schuylkill and over the South mountain barrier into the fertile dales of the Lebanon Valley, when the discouraged Palatines in upper New York heard of this offer of the Penns and took heroic courage to accept it and all the attendant hardships involved. But when they came they had as yet no titular rights to the lands they settled on. They were but squatters and acquired legal titles afterward.

To understand conditions it is necessary to know that the Tulpehocken region covered by the "community," about which these articles treat, was originally included in three large tracts, or manors, which William Penn had left by his last will, executed in 1711, to close relatives of his. The westernmost tract, lying east of Myerstown, the western line of which ran close by the Trinity Tulpehocken Reformed Church, and extending eastward a little beyond where the Mill Creek enters the Tulpehocken, thence in a straight line northward, embracing 10,000 acres, was devised to Penn's sister, Gulielma Maria Penn, who was the wife of a Mr. Fells, and therefore was known as the Fells Manor.

#### **INCLUDED STOUCHSBURG.**

Within this manor lies the village of Stouchsburg and the farms north and south of it, originally occupied by the Rieths, the Fischers, the Walborns, Michael Schmidt, Abraham Laucks, Adam Stupp and others.

From the eastern line of this manor extended a tract of 5,165 acres, known as the manor of Plumpton. It was devised to William Penn's daughter, Letitia, the wife of William Aubrey, of London. The will gave and devised a total of 10,000 acres to Mrs. Aubrey, to be selected from his vast domain "in such place or places as his (Penn's) trustees should see fit." It seems only about half of this grant was chosen from lands on the Tulpehocken. These 10,000 acres of William Aubrey and his wife were on Sept. 15 and 16, 1724 (after these

German squatters had settled upon it), by indenture of lease or release conveyed to John Knight, of the Liberty of Westminster in the county of Middlesex, who by indenture of lease or release, bearing dates, respectively, Nov. 4 and 5, 1730 (1731?), conveyed these 10,000 acres to John Page, of Austin Fryers in London. By indenture tripartite of lease and release, bearing dates, respectively, Feb. 8 and 9, 1730, between William Aubrey and Letitia, his wife, of the first part, the proprietaries (John, Thomas and Richard Penn), of the second part, and John Page of the third part, the proprietaries granted and confirmed to John Page the 10,000 acres. Then by virtue of a warrant bearing date at London, Oct. 19, 1731, there was surveyed to John Page, on April 27, 1733, in part of the 10,000 acres, the tract of 5,165 acres, "situate on Tulpehocken Creek" and adjoining the William Allen tract on the west.

This manor of Plumpton had some unique conditions. Authority was given John Page to constitute within the manor a court baron. There was patented to John Page on Sept. 17, 1735, "to the only use and behalf of the John Page, his heirs and assignees, forever to be holden by us, our heirs and successors proprietaries of Pensilvania as of the seignory of Windsor in free and common succage by fealty only in lieu of all other services yielding and paying therefor yearly unto us, our heirs and successors, one red rose on the twenty-fourth day of June in every year forever hereafter at the city of Philadelphia to such person or persons as shall from time to time be appointed to receive the same."

Cheap land this! No wonder this community lays itself out so much in the culture of fine roses, if this condition was put into subsequent deeds. It will take a truck-load of them to pay the accumulated indebtedness, if ever "the Penn heirs." on any future 24th of June shall demand the unpaid roses to be delivered in the city of Philadelphia to a person appointed to receive them.

#### **EMPLOYED AGENTS.**

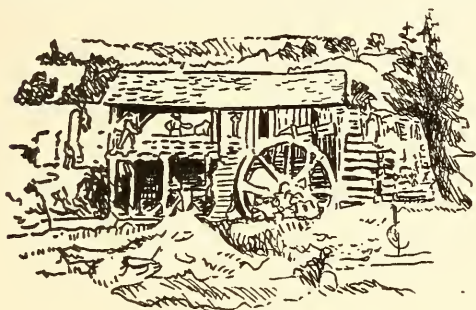
But John Page lived in London and could not very well go into the real estate business on the Tulpehocken. The late Isaac Y. Kintzer, or the present day John J. Sallade, of Womelsdorf, was not born then, so he employed William Allen, William Webb and Samuel Powell, jr., to act as his agents and attorneys, who "were to bargain, sell, etc., at the best price that could be ob-



tained, all the land comprised in this Manor of Plumpton.

Thus it came that this Palatinate colony had to wait quite a long time until they came into rightful titular possession of their vast farms. They had built their log cabins along the springs and water courses and were rearing families, clearing land, raising crops, opening highways and developing a community life long before they had clear titles to their homesteads. Court and important legal business were even slower then than now. Moreover, the nearest of Page's agents, William Webb, lived at Kennett Square, Chester county, and travel to and fro was long and tedious and correspondence between him and the owner in London took time.

Thus we find that it was not till June 11, 1743, that Conrad Weiser, for instance, came into legal possession of his homestead farm (a portion only of his landed possessions), when 347½ acres of this manor, including the court baron, were con-



An Old Mill

veyed to him. This must mean that he became the local justice and conveyancer, so that henceforth trips to Chester county could be relinquished. But up to this time all legal business was transacted through William Webb, of Kennett Square, and it accounts for the fact that he was called upon to appear on the scene of the long-continued property controversy in the Rieth Church case.

#### IN PLUMPTON MANOR.

In this manor of Plumpton lay the Rieth (Reed) Lutheran Church lands, the George Rieth, Jacob Capp (Kapp), Adam Lesch, Philip Brown, Jacob Sheffer (Schaeffer), Christian Ruchty (afterwards the Christian Deppen homestead), Gottfried Fiedler (Fidler), and the — Feake (Feeg) homesteads, all situated along the Tulpehocken Creek, from the Rieth's Church down to the Charming Forge. Northward within the manor lay the original homes of

the Conrad Long, Christopher Kayser (Keiser), Nicholas Kinzer, Peter Schaeffer, John Fohrer, Michael Krise, and eastward the homes of Conrad Weiser, ——— Derr, (afterwards Peter Lauck's farm), John Dieter, Leonard Stupp, etc.

The manor of Plumpton has the form somewhat of a boot, with the heel at the Rieth's Church and the foot extending northward to the vicinity of Host, wide enough to include the width of several of the large old homesteads from west to east; and the leg of the boot extending eastward towards Robesonia, and from the Charming Forge neighborhood to the South Mountain range. These homesteads were selected by free choice, it is supposed, upon the arrival of the Schoharie settlers, but afterwards were sold and thus legal titles secured through these land agents of John Page. With the exception of Conrad Weiser, most of these squatters paid a stipulated price in English pounds plus the yearly rental "of one red rose" to be paid on a certain day of June, "yearly forever," the day in June varying in different indentures. Within this manor is situated the town of Womelsdorf.

#### GIVEN TO GRANDSON.

The third tract of this general community lies east of the manor of Plumpton, and it consisted of a part of 10,000 acres, which was given by William Penn's will to his grandson, William Penn, this land "to be set out in some beneficial place in said province by his trustees, which 10,000 acres the said grandson, William Penn, did grant to William Allen, in fee, by indenture of Aug. 29, 1728." As part of these 10,000 acres there was surveyed to William Allen on Oct. 20, 1730, this tract of 2,794 acres in Heidelberg township, which came to be known as the William Allen tract (not manor). The original and earlier settlers of this tract were the Deglers, Leisses, Moyers, Ruths, Bennetsches, Wenrichs, Hains, Schuckers, Eckerts, Filberts, etc. It extended on its southern boundary as far east as the present South Mountain state asylum, near Wernersville, and includes all the hill slope lands westward towards the Charming Forge, embracing the present borough of Robesonia and the St. Daniel's (Corner) Church property and all the old homesteads of Heidelberg's rolling lands in these parts.

In these three tracts, or manors, the first settlers were busy for two decades getting their land cleared,

roadways made, buildings erected, the first shops, mills and stores established, but especially in getting good titles to their lands. The church question was scarcely second to these secular affairs.

Pastor Von Duehren, from Schoharie, and Rev. Henckel from Falckner's Swamp, with Pastor J. Casper Stoever, were the first to visit and serve the Lutheran settlers. It was Pastor Henckel who urged his flock, akin in the faith, to erect the first rude house of worship, which occurred in 1727. Leonhardt Rieth gave of his appropriate acres enough land for church, school and burial purposes, which, when John Page began to parcel out in divisional parts of his land through his land agents, was, with some additional acres, deeded gratuitously to the congregation as glebe land. Later Moravian missionaries came this way and gained a foothold in the congregation's life and a very conspicuous part in the congregation's very stormy history for about a dozen years. Due to a scarcity of Lutheran pastors, the school teacher, Leitbecker, assumed the pastoral role. The Moravians supplied the lack by one of their pastors and as a natural result factions were created. As a Lutheran party leader, Rev. Stoever came periodically from Conestoga and by his harsher methods, widened the schism until persecutions, expulsions and lockings of church doors were resorted to, so that even the law had to be invoked and William Webb, of Kennett Square, brought upon the scene for legal settlement.

#### **BUILD SECOND CHURCH.**

The "Confusion" resulted in the building of the second Lutheran "Church on the Tulpehocken" (Christ Lutheran, west of Stouchsburg) and the North Heidelberg Moravian Church about two miles east of Klopp's Store about the same time, while Pastor Stoever held on to his greatly reduced flock and his log church property a little while longer.

The Reformed settlers very probably worshipped for a few years with the Lutherans in their church, but soon were visited by their own pastors, Rev. John Philip Boehm, George Michael Weiss and John Peter Miller, and established their own first "Church on the Tulpehocken," which, according to as good an authority on early Reformed Church history as Rev. Prof. W. J. Hinke, D. D. of Auburn, N. Y., was the church at Host, erected

probably in the year 1733, and so named, supposedly, after a burgh in the Fatherland. Of all these early pastors it is doubtful if any one excelled Rev. John Peter Miller in erudition and piety. The very mystery and spirituality of Conrad Beissell, of the Ephrata cloister fame appealed to him, who extended his missionary and perhaps proselyting propaganda also into the Tulpehocken Valley and won as converts, in 1735, such good men as Conrad Weiser and Gottfried Fidler temporarily, and Rev. Miller permanently to his Seventh-day Baptist cult and mystic institution on the Cocalico.

#### **ASK FOR PUBLIC ROAD.**

During this early period, also, the authorities of the colonial government were petitioned by these early settlers for a public road, when the same year that the first church was erected, in 1727, this "Tulpehocken Road," or "Great Philadelphia Road," often mentioned in early deeds, was ordered built. This high road to be laid out, beginning at the Lutheran Meeting House at Tulpehocken and to end in ye high road at ye Quaker Meeting House near George Boone's mill in Oley was the first road or highway in the Lebanon Valley. It passed by the Conrad Weiser homestead, across the present streets of the later town of Womelsdorf and eastward through the William Allen tract, through the over 2,000-acre tract of George Hain on Spring Creek and its branches (on the crest of whose lands north of Wernersville stands since before the Revolution, the historic Reformed Hain Church) on to the Schuylkill Ford, at, or near the present city of Reading.

This road was improved and followed largely in the extension of the "Easton Road" from Reading to Womelsdorf in 1768, and later converted into a turnpike, known as the Berks and Dauphin turnpike, completed in 1817, now the William Penn highway. It was, therefore, these pioneer settlers of 1727 that gave us the beginning of our present-day matchless state highway.

#### **SECOND INFLUX.**

All this was done during the first years of the first settlement before 1729 when the second influx of Schoharie pilgrims landed here, coming in the same manner and by the same routs as their predecessors of 1723. There were at least a dozen families in this second migration, the leader among whom was Conrad Weiser.



Between 1730 and 1740 the religious controversy at the Rieth Church, known in history by the name of "The Tulpehocken Confusion," was the chief topic of Sabbath excitement among these settlers, while the earnest pioneer labors taxed their week-day hours to the utmost. The former date is generally given as the year in which was built the house (still standing), where were transacted more history-making events, and gathered from time to time, more prominent public characters than in any other home in the entire Tulpehocken community. Indian chiefs, church bishops and leaders, such as Count Zinzendorf, Conrad Beissel, Henry Melchoir Muhlenberg, and governmental high officials all sought this home for counsel and service

#### **MORAVIANS WITHDRAW.**

In 1740 the Moravians began to withdraw and concentrated their efforts in a school and congregation established in the present North Heidelberg township on land donated by one Tobias Bickel, where about 1744 they erected their church (since declined and the property gone over to the Reformed Church) where Moravian synods have been held and where their leaders and Bishops Cammerhof and Spangenberg and

Count Zinzendorf had frequently preached.

In 1743 the Christ Lutheran Church was built by former members of the Rieth Church withdrawing and uniting with other Lutherans as far west as Lebanon, in the erection of their edifice. It has ever since left the mother church weaker, although both were for many of the intervening years served by the same pastor. About this year (1743), also the newly-arrived Lutheran missionary and superintendent from Halle, Rev. Henry Melchoir Muhlenberg paid this neighborhood his first visit and was the guest of Conrad Weiser.

On April 22, 1745, the Lutheran missionary, Rev. Henry Melchoir Muhlenberg, was married to Anna Maria Weiser, the oldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Conrad Weiser. The nuptials were celebrated at Tulpehocken Christ Lutheran Church, and the ceremony performed by the pastor, Rev. Tobias Wagner, with Revs. Peter Brunnholz and J. H. Schamin attended as the groom's witnesses, and attendants. The entry of this marriage can still be seen on the official church records.

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I acknowledge indebtedness to original homestead drafts in the above manors, made by Michael A. and John E. Gruber, sons of this Tulpehocken (Heidelberg) section.—P. C. C.



**An Old Timepiece**



## Chapter IV.

## IMPORTANT DATES AND DATA

We continue our chronological review of 200 years of history on the Tulpehocken by saying that the early visit of Pastor Muhlenberg—afterward known as “the Patriarch of the Lutheran Church in America”—and his marriage to Conrad Weiser’s daughter, were events that linked his life intimately with this community, which he frequently visited during the life of his father-in-law in his long pastoral itineraries.

Some of his own descendants lived here many years. His eldest daughter became the wife of Rev. Christopher Emanuel Schulze, who for nearly 40 years was pastor of the Christ Lutheran Tulpehocken parish, while his second son, Frederick A. Conrad Muhlenberg, was pastor for over three years in Schaefferstown and assisted his brother-in-law in his large field.

Here in Christ Lutheran parsonage was born John Andrew Schulze, who, while himself serving as pastor, resided for a few years (1802-03) in Womelsdorf. He later served the state for two terms as one of its most capable and popular governors. Thus Womelsdorf may boast of having had one governor among its residents.

**BURN CATECHISMS.**

1735—To retrace our steps a little to “the Tulpehocken confusion,” to which we have already referred, it may be mentioned that, probably disgusted with the continuous strife at the Rieth Church and overwhelmingly influenced by the teachings of Beissel, of Ephrata, both Conrad Weiser and Gottfried Fidler again returned to their homes and faiths, after a few years of experience of cloister rules and life, while Rev. John Peter Miller remained and became the head of that Ephrata community. But before these men entered upon their new life of the mystics and solitary under Beissel, all three were participants in the burning of Lutheran

and Reformed catechisms and devotional books at the house of Gottfried Fidler.

We have been successful in locating this homestead of Fidlers, which we learned from old documents to have been upon the banks of the Tulpehocken. By the aid of Gruber’s original homestead diagram we find it was immediately across the stream from the Christian Deppen homestead on the north bank of the stream. If religious zeal, or fanaticism, deserved a marker, here is where one should be placed. But both men came out of their delusion so beautifully and long served their community so nobly that this ex-crescence has long been forgiven—by most men, never known, or else forgotten.

But that this generation may know to what labors and extremes the religious zeal of that day led men, and what an influence the Mystic on the Cacalico (Conrad Beissel, founder of the Capuchins in their cloister life and institution at Ephrata) exerted upon the dwellers on the Tulpehocken, it is recorded that Conrad Weiser, with 11 others, “accompanied Beissel in 1735, on a propagandist preaching visitation of the country as far as New Jersey.” Weiser had left his beard grow, so that he was hardly recognizable at first sight, for he had already attained fame as an interpreter and was personally widely known. His enthusiasm and devotion to the cause of the solitary convent life of Beissel made him voluntarily offer “part of his possessions toward the upbuilding of this new economy.”

**WEISER BECOMES JUSTICE.**

1738—About this time the country could no longer dispense with the valued services of the Indian agent and interpreter, and Gov. Thomas offered Weiser the office of justice of the peace, which he accepted. He left the Order of the Solitary at Ephrata and returned to the bosom of his family and his church and service of the state (colony).

1738—Weiser accompanies Bishops Spangenberg, Zeisberger and Shebosch, Moravian missionaries to the Indians, as far as Onondago, N. Y.

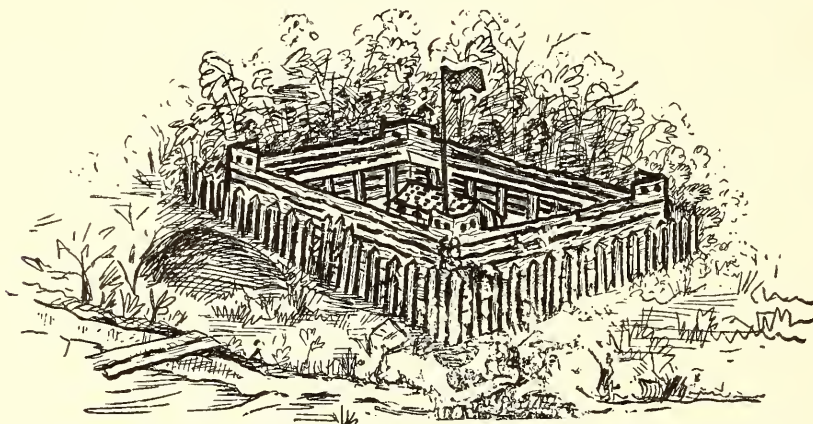
1739-40—Conrad Weiser petitions the colonial government for the organization of a new county, which however, was only effected in 1752 by the erection of Berks county.

1741—Weiser is commissioned as a justice of the peace of the county, then still Lancaster county. After Berks was erected he became justice (judge) of the new county. He is the official interpreter from 1732 to 1744, in many treaties made with the Indians, between the original colonies from New York to Virginia and the various tribes occupying these sections, and frequently traveled from his home to attend these council meetings some hun-

hocken Church, near the present Stouchsburg. Of this union sprang the most famous progeny of the German immigrants of America.

#### MORAVIANS WITHDRAW.

1740-43—As stated before, the Moravians withdrew from the first Tulpehocken, or Rieths (Reed's) Church during these years, and built their own church edifice in Heidelberg (present North Heidelberg Lutheran and Reformed Church). Tobias Bickel donating a few acres of land for church, school and burial purposes. Here they flourished for about 60 years, and here were held several synods attended by bishops and Count Zinzendorf. They gradually grew weaker and disbanded about 1800.



**Fort Northkill—Erected 1756**

dreds of miles between Albany, N. Y., and the capital of Virginia, and at least once as far as Ohio.

1742—Count Zinzendorf had arrived in America and employed Weiser to interpret for him in his missionary evangelism among the Indians at Bethlehem and Shamokin.

1743—Weiser for three months instructs Pyrlaeus, Buettner and Zander, Moravian missionaries from Europe, in the Maqua or Mohawk Indian dialect. Gov. Thomas also sends him to Shamokin this year, and he is called to Maryland and Virginia. He always traveled on horseback.

1745—In April of this year the future illustrious Rev. Henry Melchoir Muhlenberg here marries the eldest daughter of Conrad Weiser, Anna Maria, the ceremony being performed by Rev. Tobias Wagner, of Christ Lutheran Tulpe-

1745—Caspar Wister, of Germantown, generally spoken of as "the brass-button-maker of Philadelphia," deeds a large tract of land to the Reformed people on the Tulpehocken, for church purposes, upon which they erect a church edifice. The deed was written by Conrad Weiser and the conditions are the payment of one red rose annually as quit-rent. This church is located about a mile west of Christ Lutheran Church, known as Trinity Reformed Church.

1745-60—These were busy years for Conrad Weiser in his official life as justice and interpreter. He records experiences in his official journal of three journeys to Onondago, N. Y., one to Ohio, one to the Mohawk country, one to Aucquick, one to John Harris' Ferry, one to Easton and one to Fort Allen in company with Benjamin Franklin. Sixty-five official



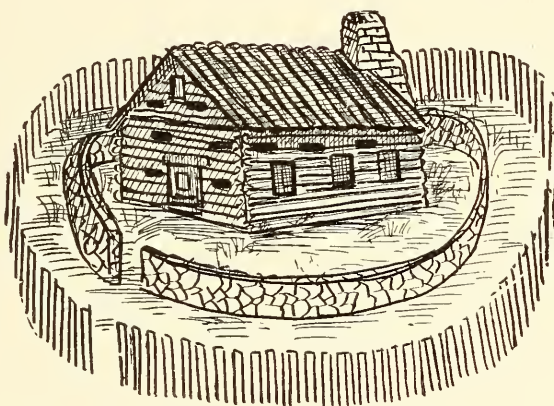
letters to the authorities are still extant showing his heavy correspondence during these years. The last of these years covered the period of the French and Indian War, in which Weiser was personally active in defense and received a colonel's commission.

### REV. KURTZ ORDAINED.

1748—This year Rev. John Nicholas Kurtz was ordained and took pastoral charge of the Tulpehocken parish. His examination and ordination and the consummation of his call took place at the first convention of the ministerium in Philadelphia. It may be of interest to quote from his diary of these days:

"Aug. 12. I arrived in Philadelphia, where to my great joy I met pastor Hartwig, from New York. Toward noon ten main questions, together with the minor questions connected

His diary continues: "Then my duty was defined, and I was consecrated and appointed to the holy ministry by Pastor Muhlenberg in the presence of the Swedish preachers. Pastor Muhlenberg explained the meaning of the laying on of hands, certainly a difficult and important office. May the gracious and merciful God keep me ever mindful of this! May he assist me and grant wisdom, faithfulness, watchfulness and untiring carefulness, humility and purity, not only that I may save my own soul, but also that, with all faithfulness I may tend those entrusted to me, that I may not through negligence be guilty of their blood! My great unfitness renders this office difficult for me, but may the God, who has called me, give strength and fitness; for this reason I plead humbly, 'Lord, forsake me not, and, as it pleases Thee, bestow upon my office Thy blessing, should



Fort Henry—Erected 1756

with them, were laid before me in writing, for me to answer, which I did, as far as God gave grace, and the shortness of time permitted.

"Aug. 13. In the afternoon I was examined on the above-mentioned questions by Pastors Muhlenberg, Hartwig and Handschuh. In the evening the license and petition for a regular preacher were laid before the deacons of Tulpehocken for their signatures, and I signed a revers: the call to Tulpehocken was then handed to me."

The next day he records the consecration of the church in Philadelphia and the celebration of the holy communion, together with the ordination services, at 3 o'clock, p. m., when Pastor Hartwig preached an earnest sermon on Acts 20: 18-21: "What a teacher has to do, or must do, if he wishes to be innocent of the blood of his hearers."

it even be but a single soul that I may save, Thine shall be the honor. Amen."

A pastor who, on his ordination day, and assumption of a pastoral call, records such a prayer has the quality to make of his ministry a success wherever he goes. Tulpehocken enjoyed his services for 22 years, and no wonder that it flourished. Two delegates accompanied him to this synodic convention, viz: Balthes Anspach, from Tulpehocken, and Andreas Beyer, from Nordkill (Bernville).

### CHARMING FORGE FOUNDED.

1749—This year the "Tulpehocken Eisenhammer" (Charming Forge) was begun by John George Nickall and Michael Miller.

1752—The county of Berks was erected this year, with Reading as

the county seat, largely effected through the efforts of Conrad Weiser, who, at this time, was a resident of Reading, where he was justice of the peace and conducted a store (known long as the White Store, and situated where the Stichter hardware store is now located, at Fifth and Penn streets).

1753—The sixth synodic convention of the Lutheran ministerium met this year in Tulpehocken (Christ) Lutheran Church.

1755—The great Easton road was laid out this year, through Bethlehem, Allentown, Kutztown, Reading, on to Harrisburg, though the portion through the Tulpehocken section was probably not completed till some years after (1768), there being an old road to this settlement since 1727.

1760—This year Conrad Weiser died (July) and was buried near his homestead, Rev. Kurtz conducting the funeral.

#### **FRENCH AND INDIAN WAR.**

1755-57—Great excitement in this region because of the outbreak of the French and Indian War, when frequent raids were made by the Indians upon this frontier settlement, and perhaps a score of families butchered, scalped or tomahawked. The old cemeteries of this period all contain graves of the victims of these atrocities.

1756—During this year Gov. Morris with 12 gentlemen from Philadelphia and a company of 70 men with 30 additional guards, as escort, passed through this section on his way to the Susquehanna to make peace with the Indians. (See Hebron Diary.)

1762—The town of Womelsdorf was laid out this year by John Womelsdorf, who came to these parts in 1760 from Amity township and married a granddaughter of Conrad Weiser, on whose original land a part of the town was plotted. This plot consisted first of 75 lots, upon

one of which Jacob Seltzer about this time erected his inn or tavern. It stood back of the present residence of Mrs. Dundore, as the old road led diagonally across our present Main or High street.

#### **VISIT BY WASHINGTON.**

This hostelry had the honor of entertaining a distinguished party on the night of Nov. 13, 1793, consisting of President George Washington, Robert Morris, David Rittenhouse, William Smith, provost of the University of Pennsylvania and Tench Francis, the land agent of the Penn estate. Of course, as might be expected, the party was serenaded, with the firing of salutes by the militia and an address of welcome made to the President by John Pliny, a town merchant, to which the President made a fitting reply. (See Rupp's History of Berks and Lebanon Counties, and paper by Louis Richards, Esq., on "Washington's Visits to Berks County.")

This was the occasion of Washington's visit to Conrad Weiser's grave, when he uttered the words: "Posterity cannot forget his services." The Seltzer tavern was in use, but latterly as a private house, or apartments, until about 1870, when it was demolished.

1757—This year the Charming Forge changed hands, Michael Reiss and Garrett Brenner operating it in company. The activities here and changes of the ironmaster down to the forge's abandonment a few decades ago, however, furnish material for a separate chapter, which will follow.

#### **KEPT FAITHFUL DIARY.**

1770-74—The patriarch's second son, Rev. Frederick August Conrad Muhlenberg, was pastor of the Schaefferstown charge during this period, and for a short time in 1770 assisted his brother-in-law in the Tulpehocken charge, and so came frequently into this neighborhood and preached in all old Lutheran



churches between Bernville and White Oak, Lancaster county, and Lebanon, Lebanon county. He kept a faithful diary, which has recently been published, from which we learn that he was married to Catharine Schaeffer, of Philadelphia, on Oct. 15, 1771, and on the 19th passed through town by stage to his home-to-be in Schaefferstown, his bride riding in the stage while he rode one of the horses on account of the crowded condition of the stage—and this on his honeymoon trip.

But, according to his diary, he became accustomed to hardships on his long preaching trips through all sorts of weather and all sorts of roads (muddy ones apparently prevailing). He sent his father an account of his first trip to Shamokin (Fort Trevorton and Selinsgrove) by horseback, accompanied by Frederick Weiser's eldest son, Conrad, which had its starting point here at the Weiser homestead. It is intensely interesting and the narrative at points thrilling with dangerous adventures. They crossed the Blue, Broad and Mahoning mountains, lying between here and their destination, slept in the open, subject to fleas and wolves, swam dangerous swollen streams and passed over narrow and precipitous mountain paths and trails to pay the Fishers (Sebastian's family (?) and Casper Rieth, jr., and Benjamin Weiser's families of Tulpehocken, who had settled there, a friendly and gospel visit.

He preached at several points on the Isle of Que in the Susquehanna and, when he left them after five days, promised to visit these scattered sheep in the wilderness again in the fall. His account abounds in description of the sights en route, especially noteworthy being the account of Fort Henry (located on Dietrich Six's farm in the Hole, back of the Round Head, above present Millersburg), where the ruins were already so complete that only a few rafters could be seen

standing, while wagon loads of bleaching bones of the savages were still visible at an old Indian camp on the top of one of Mahoning's ridges. (The site of Fort Henry now has a suitable stone marker.) The landscape view of the Lebanon Valley, stretching out before his gaze from the top of the Blue Mountains, is given with the rapture of a facile pen.

#### VISIT OF JOHN PENN.

1788—On April 10 of this year another dignitary rode through Womelsdorf on a leisurely sight-seeing trip of this valley. It was John Penn, the last of the Penn proprietorships, known generally as "the American Penn" because born in this country. He had stopped two days with his friend, Gov. Mifflin, at his summer home, "Angelica," where now the Berks county almshouse is located, and rode thence to Harris' Ferry.

1789—This year, on April 24, Gen. Peter Muhlenberg, of Revolutionary fame, eldest son of the patriarch, traveled through town on his way to the Ohio River, there to locate bounty lands given by Congress as pay for the patriotic services of the Revolutionary generals in lieu of cash. (No bonus bills then!)

He stopped all night at Christ Lutheran parsonage, where his sister and brother-in-law, Mrs. and Rev. C. E. Schulze, then resided. (See *Life of Gen. Muhlenberg*.)

1792—This year is known for two progressive movements in Womelsdorf and the Tulpehocken Valley. The first was the laying of a cornerstone for the first church in town, June 30, when the building of the present Zion's Lutheran and Reformed Church began, which edifice still ornately crowns our hillcrest as a conspicuous landmark.

The second is the survey of the then proposed Union Canal, which brought to this community the noted engineer and astronomer, David Rit-

tenhouse, and William Smith, provost of the University of Pennsylvania, a great promoter of the scheme. The canal was begun the following year, some locks built the examination of which was the occasion of the visit of President Washington and party that fall, already alluded to as lodgers at the Seltzer Tavern.

1793—The visit of President Washington and party.

#### **ZION'S CHURCH DEDICATED.**

1794—The dedication of Zion's Union Church took place this year.

1800—By this time the town came commonly to be called Womelsdorf, instead of Middletown.

1802—Rev. John Andrew Schulze, moved to town as Lutheran pastor, afterwards governor of Pennsylvania. He buried one of his children in our cemetery about this time.

1807—On July 1 of this year a post office was established here.

1816—This year the Berks and Dauphin turnpike was built through the town, completed and opened for traffic in the year following (1817).

1828—This year the Union Canal was completed, and the first boat, "the Alpha of Tulpehocken," passed westward the following year (1829).

1832—This year, in June, the Lutheran Ministerium of Pennsylvania and adjacent states held its 85th synodical session in Zion's Union Church here.

#### **WOMELSDORF INCORPORATED.**

1833—Womelsdorf was incorporated as a borough this year. (The second borough in the county, only Kutztown preceding it.) The population was about 750 at this time. First burgess was Louis Richards. The council chosen consisted of David Bennethum, William Gries, George Keiser, jr., Michael Seltzer, John Schwalm and Peter Womelsdorf. The clerk was Joseph D. Biles and the high constable George Salade.

1834—The Presbyterian Church and the town academy were built this year. The latter opened with Rev. Morse, the Presbyterian minister, as its first principal. Other pay and private schools sprung up soon after, which acted as rivals of the academy.

1835—This year Rev. William Hendel, the Reformed minister of town, was elected high constable as a joke. But he accepted the office and turned the joke into a rigid en-

forcement of the law and became a terror to evil doers.

1840—This year the Universalist Church was built. Since dismantled and congregation disbanded.

1856-57—Lebanon Valley Railroad built. In the first year a riot occurred here between the workmen and the paymaster. The latter's office was stormed and the riot only quelled by the Ringgold Light Artillery of Reading.

#### **CIVIL WAR EVENTS.**

1861-65—The Civil War. Womelsdorf and community gave its quota of soldiers and supported the government war measures. There is, however, a phase of more or less disloyalty inferred by the existence of a chapter of "The Golden Circle" organization located here. According to Rev. Hoover's "Enemies in the Rear," a published story of the locality of Wernersville during the Civil War period, the so-called "Heidelberg Brigade" started here for Reading, gathering force en route, to rescue a fellow brother from the Berks jail and to protest against the conduct of the war by the national government.

1867—Present Evangelical Church built.

1893—The Liberty bell traveled by rail down the Lebanon Valley this year on its return from the Columbian Exposition in Chicago.

#### **TROLLEY LINE BUILT.**

1894—The trolley line, connecting Womelsdorf with Reading, was built this year. Its car barn is erected in the western end of the borough.

1895—A water company was organized and incorporated. First supply of water came from the Manderbach spring (Orphans' Home), now from a reservoir near the Kluft, supplied by the best of water from the Gold Springs of the mountains. The presidents of the company have been: First, Peter D. Wanner; second, Martin D. Filbert; Third, Mrs. Mary Filbert.

1897—This year the town hall was erected. The lower story supplies shelter for the apparatus of the Volunteer Fire Co., which was incorporated the same year, with Harry Shanck, present chief.

1906—A town cornet band was organized or revived and reorganized by Calvin Reinhold as leader.

1907—This year the town's electric plant was established by the erection of a power house at the Charming Forge, which supplies the town



with light and power. This year, also, a Y. M. C. A. was established here, when meetings were held in the old Presbyterian Church with Henry D. Hackman, president, which has, however, since disbanded.

#### **ERECT WEISER MONUMENT.**

1909—Saturday, Sept. 25, of this year was dedicated and unveiled the imposing Conrad Weiser monument, erected in the front yard of the town school building. The enterprise was started by the late W. M. Zechman, the county superintendent of schools, by taking penny offerings from the school children of Berks, but as the result of this effort was not sufficient to cover the expenditure the county chapters of the P. O. S. of A. put their shoulders to the wheel and carried the enterprise to completion, and it was under their auspices that the monument was dedicated. The day was a gala day for Womelsdorf and it is doubtful if it ever before or since saw so many people assembled here.

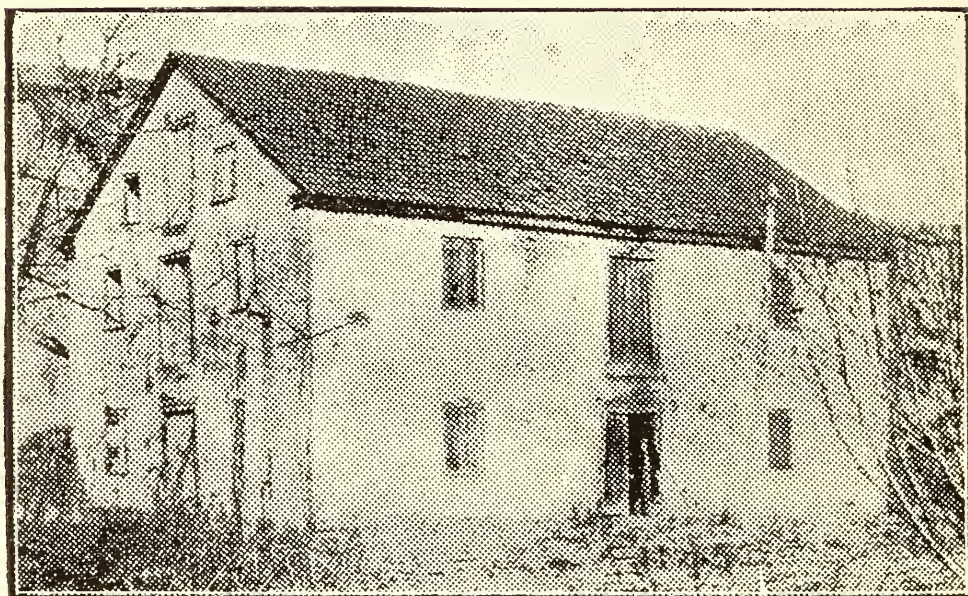
1915-16—These years witnessed the erection of the very fine and costly stone Lutheran and Reformed Churches, now gracing two of the most conspicuous corners of the town.

1917—This year witnessed the completion of the popular state

highway, known as the William Penn Highway, and stretching completely across the state, from Easton to Pittsburgh, displacing through these parts the century-old toll turnpike, and at once gaining in such popularity that on Sundays and holidays over 500 automobiles and motorcycles have been counted passing through the town in an hour.

A great touring caravan and a heavy truck freight traffic constantly use this highway. Autos from all parts of this country are seen here every summer.

1922—On Sept. 8, the Historical Society of Berks County passed through town on their 18th annual pilgrimage, traveling in many beflagged autos. They stopped about an hour at the Conrad Weiser homestead and grave, where addresses were made by President Scholl, George M. Jones and the writer, and on Sept. 15, the Republican candidates for state offices and U. S. senator made a stop of 30 minutes, with Samuel H. Illig, presiding. Brief speeches were made by Gifford Pinchot, David J. Davis and U. S. Senator George Wharton Pepper. Many Republican boosters had come out in their autos from Reading to meet the party here and accompany them down the valley to the Berks capital. Many women attended the meeting.



**Canal Grain House, near Bernville**



## Chapter V.

## ALONG THE TULPEHOCKEN

Henry Van Dyke's popular classic, "Little Rivers," has charmed 10,000 admiring readers by its well-written fishing trips, taken along certain small streams of our land; so small that most of our school geographies fail to mark or name them. Yet these backwoods streams he found the habitat of the speckled trout and other specimens of our piscatorial game, as he found fishing in them the source of fondest boyhood memories, exhilarating recreation and the school presided over by the muse of the rarest prose poetry and the sanest rustic philosophy.

The present writer invites "his gentle reader" to join him in a similar fishing trip along the banks of one of Berks county's "little rivers." He need not bait his hook for the finny tribe, nor prick his ear for a fish story, nor expect the poetic muse to be awakened; for we shall leisurely drift down stream and cast our line along the meandering Tulpehocken for a mess of facts, a little feast of biography, history and neighborhood events that have come down this water course during time's flow within the last two centuries. At least six generations of forbears have made history along this serpentine stream during this period. While, however, VanDyke took his fishing trips up stream, it will suit our purpose better to follow this little river down stream, thus keeping company with the flow of this "turtle creek" of the Indians from its source to its mouth.

**MOST IMPORTANT STREAM.**

Berks has a number of streams peculiarly, if not entirely, its own. Its largest river, the Schuylkill, while it cuts the county into halves, and for about 35 or 40 miles flows through its very heart, yet it is too large and long to be a single county stream. It is a state river and belongs exclusively and entirely from source to mouth, from its rise in the Broad and Blue mountains throughout its entire flow and increase and to its absorption at Philadelphia by the larger Delaware, to eastern Pennsylvania. But Berks has a few

lesser streams which may be named as its "little rivers," because they are peculiarly Berks county streams. They are the Ontelaunee, Manatawny, Monocacy, Antietam, Hay Creek, Allegheny, Angelica, Wyomissing and Tulpehocken. Of these the Tulpehocken is the largest and longest in its flow and is fed by the most important tributaries. Because it appears as the object and destination of the first settlers in their quest for a permanent home, and has been the scene and heart of the community settlement, or colony, here described, from the days of the pioneers to the present time, we shall go fishing today down the Tulpehocken.

While this stream has its rise in Lebanon county and plays and bubbles on for a mile or two almost unnoticed, from its several birth-giving springs, along its grass-and-flower hidden meadow banks, much as a child cries and creeps and cheers itself into notice during its infantile and puerile years in the hidden enclosures of its parental abode, so this streamlet of Lebanon's eastern watershed flows on in comparative seclusion until it approaches the Berks county line, then comes to maturity, goes sporting by old Tulpehockentown, on whose banks its founder, Isaac Moyer, built his old-time mansion, still standing, with its slave quarters on the garret-floor, unimpaired, while the town's original name has changed to that of its founder—then laves the lately developed and lucrative, famous limestone quarries of Millardsville, washes the glebelands of the two ancient Tulpehocken churches, joins in liquid wedlock with its maiden stream of the Mill Creek Valley, just east of Stouchsburg, then flows on in connubial bliss, sometimes through smooth meadows, sometimes by rough and precipitous rocky ledges and promontories, until it has traveled all through the western half of Berks' territory and is itself engulfed and lost by its absorption at Reading, by the greater waters of the Schuylkill.

**A SERPENTINE COURSE.**

Will you go with me, gentle reader, on this fishing trip down this meandering little river of Berks? Then be prepared to follow its serpentine course for many miles; for it winds and curves upon itself often and inscribes a hundred capital "S's" in its course, as it curves its pathway through the winding valley. It will take twice as long a surveyor's line to measure its curving banks as the crow would need to measure its flight in a straight line from its source to its mouth.

The Tulpehocken, like all the children of earth, can trace its life-blood (water) to two sources—a father and a mother stream, if you please—and these have their beginnings in more ancestral springs. A little to the west of West Myerstown, the traveler on the William Penn highway crosses a streamlet that flows from the northwest and has its origin in numerous springs on the southern slope of the gravel ridge, about two miles to the north. This may be called its paternal branch.

The other, or maternal spring, is situated just a few stonethrows to the south of this highway, about three miles west of Myerstown. Here, from among limestone rocks, springs forth the baby Tulpehocken, like Minerva from the head of Jove, a full-grown stream and a daughter eventually of the mighty deep. Here an Indian tribe had erected a village of wigwams and buried their dead, many of whose bones and relics have been disinterred by the white settlers in making excavations. Here the original Mr. Lei took up 1,000 acres of land and built his pioneer home over the spring, while nearby his son, Capt. Michael Lei, of revolutionary fame, and his wife, Eva Magdalena, in 1769 built their substantial stone homestead, a veritable mansion for that day. The date stone contains, besides the name and date of the builders, the solemn and pious mottoes: "O Mensch, Gedenk der Letzten Stunde," and "Gott, Segne Dieses Haus, Und Alles Was Da Geht Ein Oder Aus."

**VISITED BY WASHINGTON.**

Here President Washington and party spent at least one night, on the same trip, in November, 1793, when they visited Womelsdorf and Reading, and the bed and room the president then occupied are preserved intact, though the house otherwise has been remodeled and enlarged into a three-story mansion by Samuel Ulrich, its present owner.

The next homestead to the east is that of old Leonart Immel, who had the distinction of having given a daughter as wife to a governor of Pennsylvania (Gov. Shulze), and as having been on the building committee and one of its first trustees at the organization of the Frieden's Lutheran Church, of Myerstown, and the erection of its first church edifice in 1811. The church is a Child of Christ Tulpehocken Lutheran Church. His homestead, erected in 1759, is of stone, of colonial fashion, with a front door, broken into halves, wall closets, wide oak flooring, wide

**President Washington**

Queen Anne fireplace and mantel. The tiles of the roof have given place to shingles, the former stored alongside the house like a heap of waffles. The farm is the property of Mrs. John H. Bossler, a sister of the late Rev. Dr. Mosser, of Reading.

Next eastward we come to the Bassler farms, whose ancestral head, Heinrich Bassler, in 1738, purchased of "the brass-button maker of Philadelphia" (the celebrated Caspar Wistar, ancestor of some distinguished literary descendants, and giving the botanical name to one of our most beautiful flowering vines, the wistaria), who must have had large landed possessions along this section of the Tulpehocken in the early part of the 18th century, since his name is mentioned in many old deeds of properties hereabouts, the Trinity Reformed, Tulpehocken Church, still annually paying to his descendants "the red rose rental," each June, for his grant of a large acreage as glebe-land to this flock somewhere in the forties of this 18th century.



**MYERSTOWN THE LARGEST.**

Myerstown is next passed, which is the largest municipal community along the Tulpehocken's entire flow of between 40 and 50 miles. It was founded by Isaac Myers in 1768, and first called Tulpehockentown. Strange how many of our Pennsylvania-German towns have changed their original names. Newmantown was first called Newburg; Schaeffers-town, Heidelberg; Lebanon, Steitz-town; Annville, Millerstown; Jones-town, Williamsburg; Fredericksburg, first Nassau, then Stumpstown. Womelsdorf, Middletown, and Myerstown, Tulpehockentown. It may be that this last-named town has grown larger than any other of its rivals upon the Tulpehocken's banks, because it first honored this stream by adopting its name. Be that as it may, it has steadily gone ahead during its 150 years of life and struggle, until now it counts about 3,000 inhabitants, who have made it their home. It has had among its residents brave soldiers, a former governor (Shultze), legislators, judges, learned professors, able and famous ministers, skillful doctors and successful businessmen. The Basslers, Reillys, Woods, Klines, Coovers, Shultzes, Mossers, Uhrichs, Hauseckers, Burkholders, Stines, Batdorfs, Haaks, Ramlers, Gookleys, Schantz, Wolfs and many others have added lustre to the name of the town as well as its founder.

The founder was born in 1730, a native of the valley. He grew up here and early in life bought land on the Tulpehocken, built his house of logs (later weather-boarded) upon its northern bank, in which he had quarters prepared on the attic for a few slaves he owned, and in 1768 laid out his town. Only two years later he was fatally shot through a window at a nearby inn, wither he was summoned on some ostensible business, but evidently on a ruse to be trapped by some enemies he had made in the execution of his office as magistrate. He was taken to his home while yet conscious and is said to have made request of his family never to prosecute his slayers, as their conscience would sufficiently punish the murderers. Thus he died, a victim of uncontrolled wrath and vengeance in the very prime of life, at the age of 40 years. His remains lie buried in the old cemetery at Trinity Reformed Tulpehocken Church and have a fittingly engraved tombstone marker.

Myerstown is the site of Albright College, of the Evangelical Church, though the institution was founded as a Reformed school, and known

and operated for years as the Palatinate College. Here also is situated the Old Folks Home of the Reformed Church, known as the "Daniel Stine Home" because the mansion of this benefactor (Hon. Daniel Stine) was given as a foundation gift.

**REFUGE FROM INDIANS.**

Traveling eastward from Myerstown with the current of the Tulpehocken, we pass the Breitenbach homestead, with its house used as a refuge fortification for the neighborhood during the period of Indian depredations, the land on the north bank first having been deeded to Jonas Kitzmiller, which joined the Adam Diefenbach tract, out of which a large acreage was given as glebeland to the Reformed congregation, variously known as "The Tulpehocken Reformed," "The Leinbach's Church," and lately as "The Welker Church," because the pastors by these names served the congregation so well and long as to associate their names with the church.

Here we want to stop and cast our line for a big catch of historical and personal data. On the north bank of our stream have been actively laboring and worshipping, on opposite, almost adjoining hillsides, two flourishing historic churches, dating back to the forties of the 18th century. Their first rude edifices have given place to newer substantial stone structures, the second for the Lutheran (Christ), erected in 1786, and the third for the Reformed (Trinity), built in 1853, during the pastorate of Rev. Thomas H. Leinbach. Both churches have been served by the leading pastors of their day of each of the respective denominations. Both parsonages have been occupied by illustrious families and have witnessed history-making events. In both churches have worshiped the staunch, capable and, in some instances, illustrious forbears of their present membership for five or six generations of a very large section of this Tulpehocken settlement.

**REFORMED PASTORS.**

The Reformed pastors of this community were Revs. John Philip Boehm, John Peter Miller (later of Ephrata Cloister fame), who translated the Declaration of Independence into seven European languages, Domonicus Bartholomew (1747-1750), H. W. Stoy (1752-1755), John Waldschmidt (1757-1758), William Otterbein (1758-1764), he afterwards becoming the founder of the United Brethren Church; John J.

Ziefall (1765-1769), J. William Hendell, sr. (1769-1782), Andrew Loretz (1785-1786), Daniel Wagner (1787-93).

With the latter's ministry the Reformed Church of America ended its connection and governmental authority of the coetus, a church body of Holland; and, tired of this foreign jurisdiction, it organized an independent synod of the Reformed Church in America.

In this move Michael Schlatter and such men as the elder Hendel were conspicuous. From the time of this organization to the present (1793-1921), over 128 years, only four pastors served this church, viz.: Revs. William Hendel, jr., D. D. (1793-1823), Thomas H. Leinbach (1826-1864), Charles H. Leinbach (1864-1883) and Henry G. Walker (1884-1921). Now Rev. M. F. Klingaman is the pastor.

The Lutheran pastors of Christ's Tulpehocken Church of this period were equally illustrious. This church was the result and outgrowth of the long controversy and resultant "Confusion" at Rieth's Church between the Lutheran pastor, John Casper Stoever and the Moravian interlopers. Accordingly, in the year 1743, 166 male members and adherents united to erect a new church where their worship might be untrammelled and they could follow their tenets of the unaltered Augsburg Confession in peace and loyalty. Hence George Unruh gave five acres of his land as the site of this church and it was located about a mile west of the Rieth (Reed) Church or about half a mile to the west of the present village of Stouchsburg. A commodious log or frame church was at once erected, with careful guarding and definitions of Lutheran orthodoxy as to who should occupy its pulpit. These pastors have been capable men, many of them distinguished in American Lutheranism, and they served the various flocks under their pastoral care well and mostly for a long period of time.

#### LUTHERAN PASTORS.

The list is as follows: Revs. Tobias Wagner (1743-1746), John Nicholas Kurtz (1748-1770), Christopher Emanuel Shulze (1770-1809), Daniel Ulrich (1811-1851), Louis E. Eggers (1852-1867), Frederick P. Mayser (1868-1873), A. Johnson Long (1874-1908) and William S. Dry (1909-1921). Rev. D. M. Long-acre is the present pastor.

The first pastor joined in marriage here Rev. Henry Melchoir Muhlenberg, the patriarch and organizer of

the American Lutheran Church and long its illustrious leader or missionary superintendent, with Anna Maria Weiser, the eldest daughter of Conrad Weiser, of national fame. The ceremony was performed on April 22, 1745, either in the old parsonage or at the church altar, Revs. Brunnholtz and J. H. Schaum, Muhlenberg's friends, as witnesses. The record is still pointed out in the church book in Rev. Wagner's hand, where, and in succeeding books, the church records for nearly two centuries are well preserved. In this parsonage also was born Gov. John Andreas Shulze, the son of Rev. C. E. Shulze, who was H. Melchoir Muhlenberg's son-in-law.

#### SPYCHER'S APPEAL.

What events, local and national, have swept over our land since these godly pioneers of Zwiegler's and Luther's faith and culture here first erected their houses of worship. The French and Indian War of six years' duration swept over these uplands to their very door. For was it not one of the Reformed members, Peter Spycher—a local leader as justice of the peace and later a judge of Berks county courts—who, by his appeals, in person and letter, sought to arouse an apparently sluggish colonial government to take steps to defend this hinterland community?

Quoting from one of his letters, addressed to Conrad Weiser, then in Philadelphia, still extant, we can almost hear these first settlers sounding their anxious alarm:

"I have this account from those above named and from Peter Anspach, John Caderman, Christopher Noacre, Leonard Walborn, George Dollinger and Adam Dffenbach. We are, at present, in imminent danger to lose our lives or estates. Pray, therefore, for help, or else whole Tulpehocken will be laid waste by the Indians in a very short time—all the buildings will be buried, the people scalped. Do, therefore, lose no time to get us assistance. The assembly may learn from this work what kind and fine friends the Indians are! We hope members of the assembly will get their eyes opened and manifest tender hearts towards us; and the governor the same. They are, it is hoped, true subjects to our King George II of Great Britain, or are they willing to deliver us into the hands of these cruel and merciless creatures?

"I am your friend,

"PETER SPYCHER."



**ON THE BATTLE FRONT.**

If the reader needs any more proof that these were stormy times and that this territory for a long period was along the very battle front of this Colonial War, then let him take his place along the roadway past these two churches, where in front of Benjamin Spycher (a brother of Peter), Conrad Weiser, shortly after this letter of Peter Spycher, already commissioned a colonel, gathered his regiment of hundreds of farmers of this valley to move against the foe and repel the invading savages with their weapons of flint-locks, pitchforks and other bludgeons, and listen to Rev. John Nicholas Kurtz's pious counsel to these improvised soldiers and hear his earnest prayer to Heaven for their divine protection, before they marched towards the gaps and passes of the Blue Mountains and the Susquehanna. Or let the reader attend the solemn funeral services conducted by Pastor Kurtz, when at one time nine of these pioneer settlers' corpses, the victims of the avenging redmen with their tomahawks and scalping knives—were brought to his church door for befitting burial services.

Then shortly after the French and Indian war came the Revolutionary War, and again we hear the voice of those local leaders of the Tulpehocken, the Spycher brothers, arousing the neighborhood to patriotic fervor and to arms by helping to organize the Berks county militia. Benjamin figures next as a member of the provincial conference of 1776 and of the state's constitutional convention of July 15, 1776. But their life's warfare came to end amid honor and renown and their aged and wearied bodies found rest at last in the sepulchre in the old Reformed cemetery of this place.

**WITNESSED MANY CHANGES.**

But this community witnessed all the other great changes that came to our country generally, such as our national independence, our national Constitution making and the initiative of starting our republic by the election of George Washington as our first president, and every presidential election since, also our

other national wars and many intervening changes. It witnessed and took part in all the local changes and innovations, such as the building of roads, township divisions, erection of new counties, the passing of the parochial and private schools into the public school system, the advance of education from the erection of neighborhood and town academies to the establishment of local high schools and colleges. It saw the Sunday school come and develop to its present high standards and the young people's, men's and women's missionary societies in our churches.

It saw the Union Canal Co. organize and David Rittenhouse, the astronomer and engineer, and William Smith, the provost of the University, oversee the actual surveying of its route, building of its course and locks and launch its first boats and operate them. It witnessed the coming of the Berks and Dauphin turnpike, and a century later, the William Penn Highway.

**RAILWAY BUILT IN 1856.**

It saw the building of the Lebanon Valley Railroad in 1856-57, and traffic and trade, greatly multiplied and increased, course along these commercial arteries. It saw many of its sons and daughters arise and leave the narrower scenes of its community to bless the world in a wider sphere elsewhere. It gave at least one governor to the state—and one of its best—when the commonwealth of Pennsylvania took a son of the Lutheran parsonage (John Andreas Shulze), and placed him twice in the gubernatorial chair.

The walls of both churches echoed the pious exhortations and learned erudition not only of its own respective pastors, but of the leaders of these denominations, from the Muhlenbergs, Kurtzes, Stoevers, of the Lutheran fold, down to the Schmuckers, Krotel, the Krauths, Mann and the Schmauks and Shantz of our day, while the Reformed flocks have listened to its Schlotter and Hendels and to Nevin and Bomberger, Philip Schaff and Bausman, Dubbs and Hinke. It would take volumes to tell the important local history of this Tulpehocken region, but we cannot wade further into its deep waters on our fishing trip today.



**View of Tulpehocken Creek**



## Chapter VI.

## ALONG THE TULPEHOCKEN

We have but fairly entered into Berks territory in our former chapter's fishing trip. We came only to the community which we are especially treating in these articles, so must hurry on with our story as we have yet far to go.

Where the Mill Creek joins the Tulpehocken, just east of Stouchsburg, where the William Penn Highway crosses the stream, is the real heart of the Tulpehocken region. Here stood Leonhardt Rieth's original residence and mill, and nearby was erected the first church of the valley, on Rieth's land. The later Rieth (Reed) homestead, built of stone, which sheltered several generations of the pioneer's descendants is still standing. The mill and the church have both gone. Only the cemetery marks the latter's site, in which are buried six generations of Rieth's and the eldest son of Conrad Weiser, (Philip), and many of the once worshippers in this church.

**SOLDIERS OF ALL WARS.**

The writer recalls visiting it shortly after last Memorial Day and found many graves decorated with flags, and by a little study of these gravestones, found that soldiers of all our American wars were buried within this enclosure. It is not likely that many small cemeteries of this state can repeat this distinction as few date back to our French and Indian war.

Side by side, with the Rieth homestead stands Dr. Gerhart's bungalow, used also as a small sanitarium for some of his patients. The Tulpehocken now curves to the north, through the original Kapp's meadows, then turns to the east through the Johannes Jacob Loesch tract, on the northern bank of which stream, this one of the original settlers, had reared his home near a spring, in 1723. Forty years afterward in 1753, as indicated by an engraved date-stone in the gable-end of the house, a large Colonial stone house replaced the former cottage of logs.

This and the former house were frequently the lodging places of

Count Zienzenndorf and the early Moravian bishops and missionaries during the period of their early work among white settlers and the redmen. The diaries and records of these zealous religious workers during the colonial period, preserved in the archives of their church at Bethlehem, are full of incidents of this historic homestead. The first occupants were converted to their faith in one of the first itineraries of these Moravian missionaries, and they must have been hospitable hosts as their names often come up in the tales of other travelers. When their own race was run they were laid to rest in a private burial plot on a sloping hillside back of the homestead, but the epitaphs have become obliterated from their limestone markers.

**KURTZ BURIAL PLOT.**

Before the end of the century the farm homestead must have passed into the hands of Johannes Kurtz, since we find his tomb within the same little "Gottes-acker," about 50 x 60 feet, walled and well preserved, and the epitaph quite legible. This is what it says: "Denkmal von Johannes Kurtz, Er war ge-boren in Europa in der Schweitz und Starb in April, 1796. Alt 74 Jahre." By his side sleeps Betty Kurtz, his wife, and a number of the descendants and relatives. The Kurtzes occupied the farm for over a century, as they have but recently sold it.

And next we come to the Philip Braun (Brown) place, already alluded to in a former chapter. This is the farm nearest Womelsdorf, located on the Tulpehocken. Their son erected on this property a grist mill, which has not ceased to grind out excellent flour to this very day, though it has changed hands a number of times. Martin Brown built it in 1785. From him it changed into Keiser's hands and then into Fischer's and Stump's possession. Later a Mr. Hoffa operated it, and now for the last 30 years it has been run by Wagner and Emerich.

On the Brown property was also erected a lock on the Union Canal,

which cut through this farm, and by the side a warehouse, where during the past century a flourishing business was done in the handling of coal, grain and lumber for the community by the Smith Bros., Elias Fidler and later his son, Harry. Franklin Kintzer, Cyrus Good and William Price were the locktenders who swapped stories with the boatmen of the past. What a once lively past it was when along this stream was heard the shout of the mule drivers, upon the towpath the tinkle and the tintinnabulations of the bells upon the teams and the rattle of chains and clanging of machinery during the manipulation of the lock-gates, as well as the laughter, the shouts, sometimes the curses, of the boatmen! As there was usually considerable traffic and many locks within the county, there was much lively commotion up and down this "little river" in those days.

#### **MARSHALL HOMESTEAD.**

To the east of the Rehrersburg road and on the north bank of the Tulpehocken, is the old Peter Marshall homestead, formerly a Filbert farm, now in possession of Wayne Stump, Marshall's son-in-law. Here the Marshall family was reared, two sons, John and Dr. Samuel Marshall, both coming to distinction.

Next to the east lies the Althouse, later the Dr. Louis Livingood farm, and then the Kinzer, later Filbert farm borders on the Tulpehocken. The Beidler homestead is next, now owned by Harry Oxenrider, a son-in-law. This must have been originally the Gottfried Fidler home, where occurred the burning of Lutheran and Reformed catechisms and devotional books already alluded to.

On the south bank lay the original Christian Ruth's farm, a large tract, which later was bought by Christian Deppen and part of which tract is still owned by a lineal descendant, Jacob H. Mays, and another part by Ephraim Swope, both of Womelsdorf. Mr. Mays has

erected a fitting memorial stone by the roadside, near the old homestead, in commemoration of this worthy God-fearing ancestor. This is what it says:

"In memory of Christian Deppen and his posterity. Erected by J. H. Mays, a great-great-grandson."

The stone barn of this farmstead was years ago an oil mill. It was erected in 1817 by George Ege.

#### **CHARMING FORGE PROPERTY.**

The Charming Forge property adjoins the Mays farm on the east. It consists of an original 400-acre tract and was later divided into two large farms owned by all the owners of the forge, the last of whom were the Taylor brothers, William and B. Franklin, who operated the forge and farmed their respective lands from 1855 to 1885. The Womelsdorf electric powerhouse is located here and the William Taylor (or Ege) mansion and farm is now owned by John G. Sallade, of Womelsdorf.

From the forge the Tulpehocken takes a sharp bend northward and flows by precipitous bluffs and hills. About two and a half miles it brings us to Krick's Mill and saw mill formerly Seibert's Mill. Later the Derrs owned it and it was last operated by Benjamin Bickel and Nathaniel Zerbe. When the mill burnt about 12 years ago, the post office here established in 1867 was taken away to Cross Keys. A postal stage route used to run from Reading via Cacoosing, State Hill, Kloppe Store, Krick's Mill to Wintersville, at all of which places were post offices. Now this section is served by three free rural deliveries, one from Robesonia and two from Bernville.

Old homesteads in this section on the east bank are those of Peter Laucks, the Andersons, and then farther east, the Kloppe, Grubers, Fischers and Stumps. The dwelling house at Krick's Mill is said to be constructed of the logs of the first Tulpehocken Reformed Church



of Host, where a marked date of 1735 still is plainly seen. Nathaniel L. Zerbe weather-boarded it. Cross Keys Hotel is on the west side of the stream, and in Jefferson township, as the Tulpehocken divides it from North Heidelberg.

#### WATERS TURN MILL WHEELS.

About three-fourths of a mile beyond this hotel the waters of our stream again turn the wheels of another mill, known as Sunday's mill, but formerly built, owned and operated by a Mr. Zerbe, who took up the land grants about here.

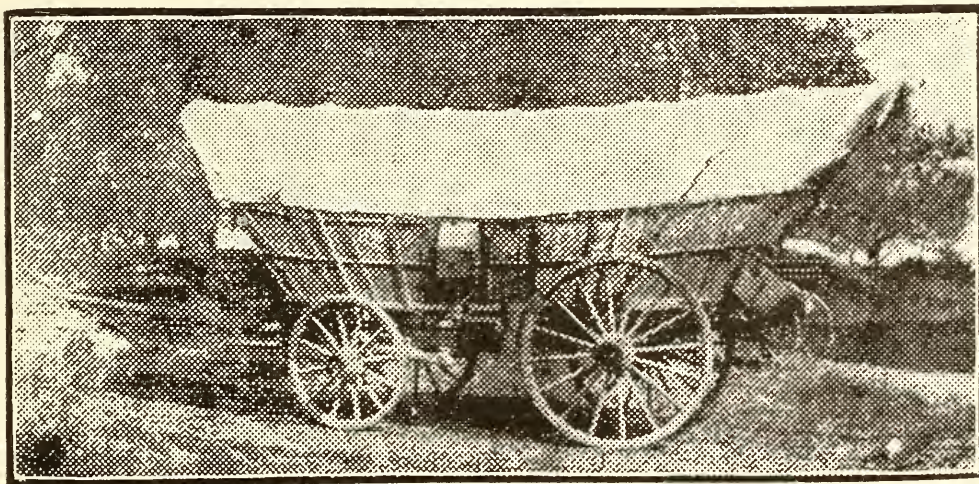
Next our stream laves the glebelands of the Little Tulpehocken Union Church and cemetery, one of the oldest churches in the county

with the abandonment of the canal all but the mill have fallen into disuse.

On the south bank of the Tulpehocken, from Bernville, lived the Stump's, a private burial plot, containing the graves of the former generations. The name is still prominent in this section, and most of the descendants have stayed near the old homestead and many of them are members of St. Daniel's (Corner) Church.

#### CREATED BY CANAL.

The town of Bernville was largely created by the coming of the canal. The latter's projection into these parts, in 1819, gave Thomas Umbenhauer, its founder, the first sugges-



Conestoga Wagon

and served now by Revs. Ruth (Reformed), and Klick (Lutheran). The present edifice of stone was erected in 1809 and in its cemetery lie numerous Radebachs, Groffs, Grubers, Wenrichs, Haags and Graeffs, indicating that the ancestors of these named families must have settled in these parts.

At Bernville the Tulpehocken is again increased by a considerable stream from the north, known as the Northkill. Near its junction flourished long Stoudt's store and hotel, a mill, operated at present by the Berger Bros., and two large grain or warehouses and large tanneries; but

tion and stimulus. Owning the land along the public road that led past a well-nigh century old church site, located here at the junction of the Northkill with the Tulpehocken, and at the latter's northernmost bend, he made the adventure and laid out his town plot.

On March 7, 1820, he held public sale of town lots and the Filberts, Stoudts, Seyberts, Wagners, Strausses, Miesses, Hecks, Goods and Umbenhauers were the first purchasers. They began to build houses, stores and shops at once. Soon merchants, tavernkeepers, blacksmiths, tinsmiths, wheelwrights,

butchers, bakers, tailors, weavers, tanners, hatters, chairmakers and even ministers and doctors did business along its solitary main street, as in many a similar "dorf" in the Palatinate, or the Schweitz, where most of their ancestors had come from.

#### **RAPID DEVELOPMENT.**

The founder gave his new town the name of his ancestral native town in the Schweitz, which the rolling contour of the surrounding townships strongly suggested. It began at once to prosper. Many industries came its way, such as tannery, foundry, creameries, cornet bands and a national bank. In 1851 it was incorporated into a borough. While the canal flourished the town prospered, but with the decline of the former the latter suffered and many once flourishing industries entirely succumbed. The enterprising citizens worked energetically to keep the town alive and prosperous. They subscribed heavily to the South Mountain Railroad project with the promise of a branch line from Strausstown to Reading to pass through it. The failure, however, of this enterprise and the total abandonment of the canal were hard blows to this town as well as Frystown, Millersburg, Rehrersburg, Strausstown and Shartlesville.

An attempt was made to get a trolley line from Reading, but the coming of the automobile and good roads knocked down this enterprise and so left the still hopeful and contented town dwellers with two auto buses for their outside wares and news. These run daily to Reading and Robesonia, respectively, twelve and eight miles away.

But despite railroads and canals and trolley lines, Bernville is no farther away from the center of gravity, or the sun, moon and stars, or else the heart of God and the Eden of happiness, along the route of personal contentment, than are New York, Chicago or San Francisco,

even if its citizens are a little farther removed from their department stores, theatres, etc.

#### **TWO OLD MILLS.**

Between Bernville and Mt. Pleasant are two more old mills, Stoudt's mill, still in operation, and Conrad's mill, now abandoned. Mt. Pleasant, long known as Obold, because of the settlement here, prior to the establishment of the county, of Joseph Obold, the progenitor of an old and honored family, is next reached. The prominence of the Hetrick family later, whence hails Dr. George Hetrick, of Birdsboro, for a long while gave it the name of Hetricktown. Its post office and the town proper came about 1835. It has less than 50 houses now, but a pleasant location and a pleasant name.

Next, below Mt. Pleasant, is Hiester's mill, another center of activity along the Tulpehocken in the years past, and here is the source of that illustrious family of Hiesters, descendants of Gabriel Hiester, which has given Berks one of the best known and honored of her families, and the state an excellent governor.

Floating down our "little river," we presently pass the Blue Marsh, a little hamlet of about 20 houses, founded as early as 1775, where the Reber Mills were long operated, from which family stock comes that worthy scion of today, James T. Reber, president of the First National Bank, of Reading. Next we come to Lorah, formerly and yet generally spoken of as State Hill, near which are located the famous Rick fruit farms, and from which elevation superb scenery greets the eye.

#### **VAN REED PAPER MILL.**

Farther on down stream we come to the mouth of the Cacoosing, where the Van Reed paper mill has been located for many years. The Van Reeds are another notable Berks family. Passing Wertz's Mill, we soon float down to Glenside, opposite which stood long ago, the



William's Mill, now dilapidated, while at Bushong's Mill, we come to the mouth of our little river of Tulpehocken, near which is rapidly building up the Coney Island of Reading.

We have floated with the current of the stream and washed into many an old mill race and laved the acres and meadows of many an old Pennsylvania-German homestead; let us now be diverted and board one of the old-time canal boats and sail back in it through all the locks en route, while an old boatman will name to us these locks in order and give us also the name of its tender, if recalled.

### 30 OLD CANAL LOCKS.

There were thirty of these canal locks from its mouth to the Tulpehocken's source in Lebanon county and we shall recall them in order, though never again shall any traffic pass through them, nor the merry-making of the locktender, or the whip's crack of the mule driver on the tow path, waken the echoes of the valley. The railroads and the turnpikes and the autos have given the death knell to the canal industry of our country. But one Panama makes up for a score of interior lock canals in volume of business. We are, however, fishing in the olden time and have gone far down our stream and shall ride home to our starting point in one of the boats that used to ply up and down its narrow waterway, and so be locked through these 30 chambers. So here we go up the artificial channel, carrying our string of historical and personal facts caught in today's fishing trip.

Hence, down at the Penn street Schuylkill dam, where the Schuylkill canal boats, coming up the river valley from Philadelphia, loaded with goods from the city, and taking the place of the wagoners of the generations preceding in hauling grain and other farm products to Philadelphia in their Conestoga

wagons and manufactured merchandise back to the interior, we are taken across to enter the Union canal.

We board the old Alpha boat, the first one that ever sailed up the Tulpehocken Valley, and greet the boatmen, salute the lock-tenders and see the scenery as we slowly sail up this scenic, winding commercial watery artery of the state that the greatest of Pennsylvania leaders and statesmen of over a century ago promoted and constructed. Every bend of the canal's course was so surveyed and every lock en route ordered by the chief engineers, David Rittenhouse and William Smith, provost of the University of Pennsylvania, and later approved by Engineers Lehman & Aycrigg, a century and more ago.

### UP THE UNION CANAL.

So here we go. We are safely across the Schuylkill dam level and have entered the Union (Tulpehocken) Canal. Not far up stream we come to the first canal lock, known as Winter's lock, and the experience of being towed into an immense brownstone box, or cellar, and then having the monster water-gates closed behind us, with all their creaking and grinding of wheels and chains of this canal lock machinery, gives one a novel, a somewhat gruesome experience, somewhat like that of a prisoner upon whom penitentiary gates are closing. But we shall soon get used to this, for it will oft be repeated on our journey up the Tulpehocken. Presently the flood gates that hold the waters of the canal back on a higher level are slowly opened by another set of wheels and chains and pulleys, and we find ourselves gently lifted—on a slow, soft watery elevator—until presently we issue out of our submarine prison cell and once more spy the landscape.

Now we are afloat again on the bosom of the canal on about a 15-foot higher elevation or level. This

much the creek falls in the distance traversed. This experience will be repeated about 30 times until we get back to the source of the Tulpehocken and the summit of the canal in Lebanon county, which highest level of the canal had to be artificially supplied with water from immense pumps in operation at the Union Water Works back on Swatara Creek, eight miles northwest of Lebanon, from which summit the boats were locked downward in both directions towards the Schuylkill and the Susquehanna rivers. Quite an engineering feat for the engineers of more than a century past. No wonder it attracted such men as President Washington (himself the head of a similar canal company in Virginia), and Robert Morris, the financier, and Tench Francis, of Philadelphia, the agent for the Penns' estates, on an inspection tour to this Tulpehocken Valley as early as 1793, after the first locks of this canal summit were built.

#### GLIDING THROUGH LOCKS.

But we must be off, or we'll never get back home! And the best we can do, for want of space in this narrative, is just to glide through these narrow, box-like watery devices, repeat their names with here and there a personal or historical comment, saying "Hello" to the lock-tender and be off.

The second lock is located at Kissingers, a name given by an old, noted and numerous family that just above the Schuylkill avenue bridge, near Reading, for generations owned a large farm, operated a grist mill and donated the land for the Kissinger Union Church, where the family worshipped for many years, and in which cemetery most of those departed are buried. Their prominence in this locality at the time of the canal building gave the name to this lock.

The next lock we come to is the Shearer lock, likewise named for the Shearer family, long resident

and prominent here. From this stock came the doctors, James Y. and Wayne L. Shearer, well known all over Berks and related to Christopher H. Shearer, the noted landscape painter of near Tuckerton.

And next we glide through the locks at Wertz's mill. Here the Wertz family have lived long enough and been so successful in their businesses and in the training of their offspring that it gave them a local name that stuck and made of the virtues and successes of the family known all over the county. The last and perhaps most prominent scion of this stock is George W. Wertz, miller and man of affairs, of Wernersville.

#### VAN REED'S PAPER MILL.

We are only a few miles above the mouth of the Tulpehocken, but we have caught big fish in this historic stream, in sterling Berks county family names of the pioneer stock. And presently we come to another next up-stream, that of Van Reed, opposite whose paper mill on the Ca-coosing, is located our next canal lock. Here a Mr. Reber used to be lock-tender. We greet Mr. Mayer as the keeper of the lock at Blue Marsh. We wave our hats to all the noted Berks Hiesters of six generations as we pass the Hiester locks. Lawrence Hettinger is captain of the watery basin as we glide through the Hettinger locks. Benneville Zechman greets us with his smile as we pass the Mt. Pleasant locks, while Nathan Fromm swaps a story with us at Stoudt's lock. Eli Zerbe is the lock-tender at Stoudt's Mill, while Wallace Shalter and Messrs. Conrad and Witman give us the right of way through the double locks at Bernville.

On the west side of Bernville, William Klee locks us through at Klee's and Benneville Koch at Koch's locks; John F. T. Moyer at Moyer's, and John Zechman, at Zechman's locks. At Cross Keys, Adam Lengel, sr., locks us to the next higher level, while Peter An-



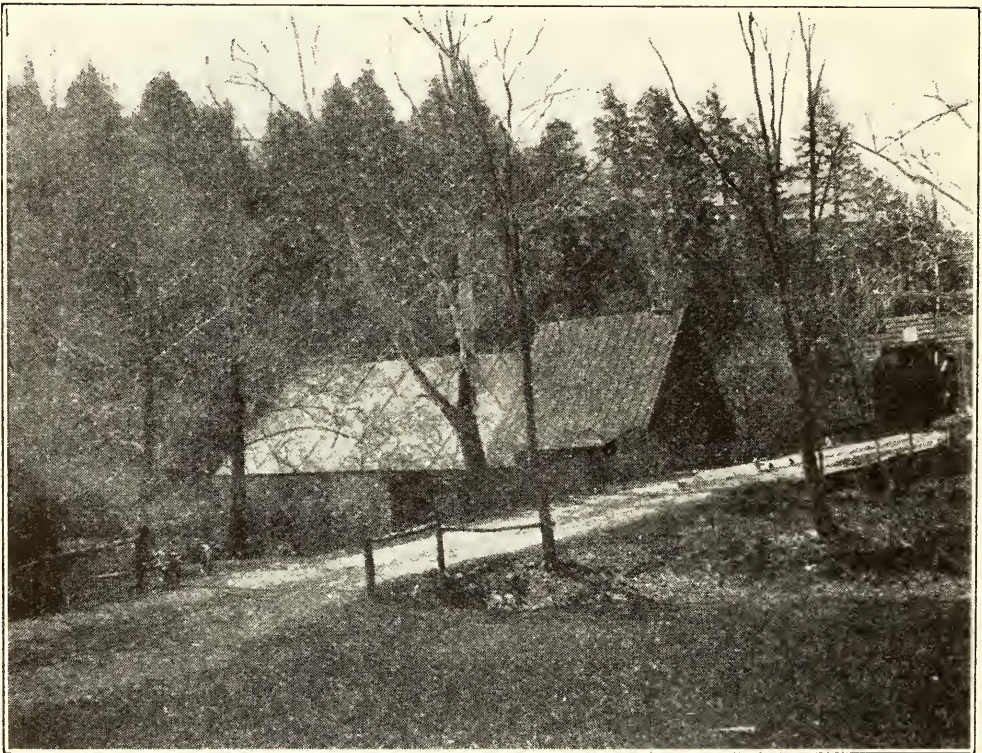
derson does us the same service at Krick's Mills. Werner's lock is kept by William Werner, while at Charming Forge, the double locks are long kept by Samuel and Edwin Moyer. And now we come to Womelsdorf, where Franklin Kintzer, Cyrus Good and William Price locked through hundreds and hundreds of loaded boats and will let us pass. We pass the Fischer lock by one of the family working the lock-gates, while at Rieth's lock, Isaac Mountz does us this favor. At Royer's Mill, directly south of Stouchsburg, were formerly located flourishing warehouses, long kept by Messrs. Klopp and Stump, fathers, respectively, of the late A. C. Klopp, of Sheridan, and Wayne Stump, of near Womelsdorf.

#### **BURKHOLDER'S MILL.**

Next we come to Burkholder's mill, near Christ Lutheran Church,

where descendants of Hans Burghalter, the original immigrant of this family, over 100 years ago were busy grinding the neighborhood grist and locking through the passing boats at the time of the operation of the canal. So we will let a kin of the Eagle's gifted and enterprising editor send us through this lock. The name of this family stock is still nobly borne by many scions. A few have dropped or slipped the "halter," but the Eagle's editor still holds on to the "holder" while we hold on to our canal ship.

At Millardsville we pass through St. John's locks and at Myerstown are lifted to another level, while at the Uhrich locks Josiah DeWees lifts us up to the four-mile summit of the canal, the last along the Tulpehocken, and with this experience we'll bring our long fishing trip to an end.



**Old Charming Forge and Bridge**



## Chapter VII.

TULPEHOCKEN'S EISENHAMMER OR  
CHARMING FORGE

In our fishing trip down the Tulpehocken, we passed the historic old Charming Forge, located upon its banks about three miles northeast of Womelsdorf. It deserves a chapter in these annals.

As early as 1749 John George Nikoll, a hammersmith, and Michael Miller, having previously purchased the land at the bend of this stream, just below Gottfried Fidler's and Christian Deppen's farms, built a dam across the creek, just where it describes the second curve of the letter "S," a precipitous wooded bluff turning its course sharply from a southward to a northward direction in a graceful curve. The water power generated by the fall of this dam was sufficient to operate a forge hammer, which they called the "Tulpehocken Eisenhammer."

While quite a number of similar forges were springing up in other parts of eastern Pennsylvania, this was the first and only one on the Tulpehocken. It had won a name for itself before even Womelsdorf was laid out, and thus had to be named for the stream, rather than for any nearby town center to make known its location.

## CARRIED ON 150 YEARS.

A race course was dug, the simple machinery set up and by means of charcoal, burned in the nearby South Mountain wooded slopes, the manufacture of iron was begun. The industry was carried on here uninterruptedly for nearly 150 years by different firms, and in its successor, the Robesonia Furnaces, may be said to be still in operation, and on a larger scale than ever.

But there are account books, ledgers and old letters still extant to show that for a long time this industry on the banks of the Tulpehocken was run on a big scale and in a most flourishing condition.

After eight years of primitive up-building of the industry, the plant changed hands. In 1757 Michael Reis and Garrett Brenner bought the "Eisenhammer" from its found-

ers and continued its operation on presumably a larger scale. As early as 1760, Henry W. Stiegel, of Mannheim and Elizabeth Furnace fame, known as a great ironmaster and glass manufacturer and commonly known as "Baron," came into notice here by the purchase of lands adjacent to the forge tracts, and in 1763 bought an undivided half of the forge property with appurtenances, together with 859 acres of additional woodland from C. and A. Stedman, who seem to have been the owners, or part owners at this time. Stiegel constantly added to his land holdings, so that by 1770 he had 3,700 acres of mountain land. It was Stiegel who changed the name of the "Eisenhammer" to that of "Charming Forge," due to the attractive surrounding natural scenery.

## PRESSED BY CREDITORS.

But soon financial embarrassment overtook this extravagant young manufacturer. The Steadmans brought pressure to bear upon their debtor, and in 1772 he was forced to lease his interest to Paul Zantzing, of Lancaster, and George Ege, a nephew of Stiegel's by his second marriage. But the Steadmans pushed their claims and Stiegel, being an insolvent debtor, was, in 1774, cast into prison at Philadelphia, being released the following year by a special order of John Penn.

Under the warrant to affix the great seal we find the following: "To Edmund Physick, keeper of the great seal of Pennsylvania, 28th day of April, 1775. These are to authorize and require you to affix the great seal to an act for the relief of Henry William Stiegel, a languishing prisoner in the gaol of Philadelphia county, with respect to the imprisonment of his person.

"JOHN PENN,

"Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Province of Pennsylvania."

The Charming Forge property thus came into possession of George Ege, he first acquiring Stiegel's share for £838, and nine months later buying the remaining interest for \$1,663, thus becoming its sole owner and manager, and operating it for a period of 50 years from 1774 to 1824.

#### LIST OF FORGE OWNERS.

The following list of owners from the end of Mr. Ege's operation of the forge to the present time is gleaned from the succession of deeds at the transfer of the property.

farm of about 370 acres, and a number of large tracts of mountain land, situated in Berks, Schuylkill and Lebanon counties. These last named trustees on Feb. 13, 1837, sold this property to George D. B. Keim, of Reading, and Jacob W. Seitzinger, of Cumru township, Berks county, for \$25,000.

Second—On June 8, 1838, Messrs. Keim and Seitzinger sold two-thirds of their interest to John McCrea, of Philadelphia, for \$29,000. Later they sold the whole estate to Henry P. Robeson, of Heidelberg township (founder of Robesonia), and Clement Brooke, of Pottstown.



**Charming Forge Mansion**

First—George Ege, though at one time considered quite wealthy, either from a dullness of business or extravagant living, or else not able to manage profitably his manifold businesses, came to the point that he could not meet his obligations promptly, was frequently dunned for payment of notes due and protested, and thus harried on every hand, on May 25, 1824, made an assignment of his vast possessions by the appointment of three trustees to settle up his involved and insolvent business. Andrew Taylor, Richard Boone and Joseph Old were these trustees. Later Simon Seyfert took the place of Mr. Old. The property consisted then of a four-fire forge, a rolling mill, grist and saw mills, dwelling houses and other outbuildings, a

#### SOLD TO TAYLOR & SONS.

Third—On March 5, 1855, Robeson & Brooke sold it to Andrew Taylor and his sons, William and B. Franklin Taylor, for \$25,000. The deed says the forge property was then bounded by land of John Richards, Daniel and Reuben Stoudt, Philip Lash, John Himmelberger, Michael King, Cyrus Sellers, Andrew Schoener, the late John Kintzer and Samuel Fidler.

Fourth—On March 10, 1866, Andrew Taylor made his last will and testament, whereby he devised his third share of the property to his two sons, already part owners of the property, which soon came into effect by his death. So they operated the forge for many years.



Fifth—The next transfer occurred March 28, 1892, when William and B. Franklin Taylor sold the property to George R. Taylor, of Robeson, for the consideration of \$9,000. On Jan. 26, 1893, they sold another half acre to George Taylor for \$1.

Sixth—George Taylor having died, his widow, Sallie J. Taylor, on April 3, 1916, sold to Claude K. Taylor, and John J. Sallade, of Womelsdorf, the forge property and the farm reduced to 208 acres and 29 perches, together with stone mansion and other out-buildings, for a fair price. She had previously sold to the borough of Womelsdorf over 22 acres for use of an electric power house and water courses.

#### **NOW OWNED BY SALLADES.**

Seventh—Later Claude K. Taylor sold his half interest to Mr. Sallade's son, Lee, so that it is now in the possession of J. J. Sallade & Son, of Womelsdorf.

Repairs to the mansion were made and a number of small dwelling houses, formerly used by forge employees, were converted into convenient cottages and bungalows for summer recreationists. The farm has been improved, a large barn built, and the whole place put into good condition. But the large stone historic mansion is unoccupied. What a place for a summer or permanent home of a man of means and leisure! Or what a sanitarium could here be erected by some doctor, who sought rest, recreation, pleasing scenery and comfort for his patients! Or what a club house is here ready for some golf club, with the farm big enough for all the links.

George Ege was quite a notable character. He was born in 1748, the son of Michael Ege, a soldier in the French and Indian War, who was the son of Bernard Ege, who emigrated to this country from Wurttemberg, Germany, in 1738. When George Ege's father died, in 1759, Mr. Stiegel took the widow and two sons (George, aged 11 years, and Michael, aged about 9), into his family and hospitable care at Elizabeth Furnace. The boys were carefully trained by Stiegel in the best methods of iron manufacture, and both did credit to their teaching in after years, the former becoming the leading ironmaster of Berks, and the latter of York and Cumberland counties.

#### **PROSPEROUS CAREER.**

George Ege had a long and prosperous business career, acquiring

also in due time the forge near Port Clinton and the Reading furnace, and with these properties many thousand acres of woodland, so that he was the largest land owner of Berks county in his day. He owned also, besides these forge properties, the farms known as the Spring, Sheaff, Leiss and Richards farms, located near Charming Forge. In 1824 the assessed value of his personal property and real estate was \$380,000. During the Revolutionary War he was an ardent patriot, rising to a place in the General Assembly of Pennsylvania in 1783, and from 1791 to 1818, a judge of the Berks county courts. He lived and died in the Charming Forge stone mansion, still standing, which he built in 1777, his death occurring on Dec. 14, 1829, in his 82d year. He is buried in the Womelsdorf cemetery. One of his sons, Michael, married Rev. Emanuel C. Shulze's daughter, whose granddaughter was the wife of John Ermentrout, of Reading.

Soon after he secured entire possession of the Forge property, Mr. Ege began to enlarge the plan and increase the output. In 1777 the executive council of Philadelphia authorized the employment of Hessian prisoners of war, held at Reading and Lancaster. Hence the forges and furnaces of Chester, Lancaster and Berks counties employed bands of them and put them to such work as they could do. The casting of cannon and shot for the Revolutionary army took place in all these iron factories. But George Ege, early in 1777, purchased from Congress the services of 34 of these prisoners to cut a channel through a bed of rock to supply his slitting mill at the Charming Forge with water power. It is noted that on Nov. 5, 1872, he paid the government the amount of £1,020 for this labor. He also owned a few colored slaves about this time, as his ledger accounts and correspondence reveal.

#### **STIEGEL'S LAST YEARS.**

After Baron Stiegel's freedom from prison, he found a home with Mr. Ege and spent his closing years in an optimistic hope, but a vain attempt, to retrieve his lost fortune. He kept the books of this industry for a time and is reported as ending his days teaching a school at Womelsdorf, and also instructing the children of the employer and employees at the forge. He died in the mansion on Jan. 10, 1785, and is most probably buried in the Corner (St. Daniel's) Lutheran Church

cemetery, lying in an unmarked grave. By a remarkable coincidence his brother, Anthony, had died the day before and was buried at Schaefferstown.

It would be intensely interesting to branch off from our subject here and go into the further story of Baron Sitegel's checkered and somewhat eccentric and extravagant career. But we must desist, mentioning merely that he came from the neighborhood of Manheim, Germany, in early manhood, with his pockets full of money and his brain full of dreams which he sought to realize in a land big with opportunity. His name is connected with Elizabeth Furnace as ironmaster, with Manheim as glass manufacturer; with Brickerville, Lancaster county, as churchman and founder; with Schaefferstown, Lebanon county, as builder of a summer home and tower, and with Charming Forge, as part owner at one time and the scene of his last days and death. He made glass that now brings fabulous prices by relic hunters and collectors. He gave a church property (Manheim Lutheran) "for the rental of one red rose in June," observed in a rose festival each summer. But he failed in business and went to prison because he could not pay his debts, died before he was quite 54 years of age, and lies buried in an unknown grave. He wrote a prayer while in prison that is a model for Christian humility, patience, forbearance and charity. (Found in Pennsylvania German Magazine, Vol. 1, No. 3, page 4.)

#### **BIOGRAPHIES OF STIEGEL.**

Biographies of Stiegel are extinct. We refer the reader for further light on the ironmasters and old forges to a book by Augusta M. Longacre, entitled "Forges and Furnaces in the Province of Pennsylvania" and to the collection of old forge and furnace ledgers and account books kept in a separate book case at the Pennsylvania Historical Society Library, 1300 Locust street, Philadelphia.

We have copied from the Charming Forge ledgers, above alluded to, some of the names of persons with whom it did business in Stiegl's and Ege's day, when it showed that the forge had a large trade and served an extended patronage in bar iron and stove plate castings, etc., making "Bigg 10 plate, small ditto, bigg 6 plate, small ditto, middle ditto, bigg 5 plate, middle ditto, small ditto," besides "Moravian stoves—an open 6 plate, half stove."

#### **PATRONS OF THE FORGE.**

Scores upon scores of customers' names are included in the accounts, but we quote only such as struck us as familiar, as follows: Christian Grottinger, Georeg Ege, Anthony Stiegel, Jacob Haldeman, Michael Boehm, Thomas Lincoln, Anthony Weitzell, James Old, Jerome Heintzleman, Conrath Fishburn, Simon Schnieder and William Appleton.

"May 1, 1782, Daniel Womelsdorf, \$487.10; Daniel Womelsdorf, barr iron, 6.15, \$768.35; to cash paid Casper Read for wheat, \$358.25 to Paul Zantzinger, received of him May 13, 1780, \$225; Philip Marsteller, dr., to cash sent him at different times, \$65; negro Tom, pair shoes, \$45; negro Philip, 2 pair shoes, \$90; negro Jack, pair shoes, \$45; Adam Shrack, for one bushel wheat, \$22; John More, for two bushels rye, \$36; Edward Jones, for two bushels wheat and two bushels rye, \$94; May 29, 1780, Robert Coleman, dr., barr iron, three teams, \$60.

The above accounts lead one to observe that there must have been a "high cost of living" after the Revolutionary War, the same as after the World War. Also, that if a pair of slave shoes cost \$45, it hardly paid to keep slaves. Flour must have been high with wheat at \$22 per bushel.

Among the customers were the familiar names of Daniel Womelsdorf, Philip Marsteller, a pallbearer at George Washington's funeral, who was a resident of Lebanon, and Robert Coleman, the later owner of Elizabeth Furnace and the founder of the celebrated Coleman family of Cornwall and Lebanon.

#### **OLD RECORDS FOUND.**

"More important and interesting data we cull from a box of old papers and letters which a friend of ours more recently rescued from loss or destruction at the forge mansion, where boxes and barrels of old forge documents and correspondence were exposed to the winds and weather from a general house cleaning when the property changed hands. They speak for themselves, but surely they almost repeople the place with its long-past owners and masters.

Here is a parchment deed given by Paul Zantzinger to George Ege "for a moiety of a moiety of Charming Forge and Lands, etc.," in 1774, which is interesting for the sheepskin on which it is written, the minute description of the land's location and the careful legal phraseology employed, as well as the per-



sons named as owners of land bordering upon the several large tracts thus conveyed.

It appears that Paul Zantzinger was an ironmaster from the "borough of Lancaster," and George Ege an ironmaster "from York county." It also names Adam Helwick, Hans Zimmerman, Ulrich Branner, Adam Sontag, Peter Geizinger and Jacob Miller as owners of bordering tracts, and has the signatures of George Nagel and Edward Burd as witnesses to the document. The deed was acknowledged before John Patton, "one of his majesty's justices of the peace for Berks county," on Feb. 9, 1774, all of which is signed in Paul Zantzinger's bold hand and sealed with his seal in red wax. It was recorded "word for word and figure for figure in the office for recording of deeds at Reading in and for the county of Berks in book B, vol. 5, page 447, etc.," on March 12, 1774, by James Read, recorder.

### BOND AND JUDGMENT.

Another paper is a bond and judgment from Jonathan Potts to Edward Wells, given on July 11, 1744, and "in the 18th year of the reign of our sovereign lord, George the second, by the grace of God, king of Great Britain, etc."

Other old documents are loose leaves of ledger accounts of various kinds of merchandise bought by Ege in 1785, mentioning a large variety of articles, including loaf sugar, coffee, Hong Kong tea, spirits, thread, hose, beaver hats, ivory comb and ribbons for Miss Betty, 44 pounds iron for stone house, 12 whetstones, 2 cast steel razors and strop, etc.

Another bond, given by Anthony Groeber and Casper Wahl to Charles and Alexander Stedman & Co., for 162 pounds and 4 shillings, on Nov. 24, 1754, is witnessed by Susanna Gray (whoever she was; but presumably some Quakeress of Philadelphia, for a note says: "Wahl lives in Kensington, near the windmill, upon Mr. Ball's place), is interesting because of its age, the names of the Stedman Bros., the fact of the latter debtor signing his name in German, while the former makes "his mark."

Since old letters are always interesting, they are especially so when to or from prominent persons and historical characters. Among the valuable documents above alluded to concerning the business transactions at Charming Forge, one is especially valuable and interesting to the present writer, and will doubtless so prove to the reader.

### LETTERS OF 1779 AND 1780.

Quite a correspondence was carried on between Mr. Ege and William Gwynn, the ironmaster of Mary Ann Furnace, which was located in eastern Berks, on a branch of the Little Lehigh Creek. We have at least four letters in hand from this careful penman of the long ago. They were written in the years 1779 and 1780 and addressed to George Ege, of the Charming Forge.

First of all, the name "Mary Ann Furnace" from whence these missives were sent, had an awakening effect upon the writer. For it was upon a woodchest back of a six-plate wood stove, with the name distinctly cast upon it in capitals, that the writer's earliest memories date and the first boyhood games are associated. "Hully-gully" and "Blum-sock" were there enacted many a winter's night, when the good Mary Ann Furnace product roasted our shins as well as our chestnuts and potatoes, I learned my letters there; and now, at three-score-and-ten, I come across letters written a century and a half ago by the master who cast these old-fashioned family friends.

The correspondence hinges on business matters principally, but lots of intelligence conveyed may yet prove valuable matter historically, so I will insert a few items:

From allusions it is plain the Mary Ann Furnace was built in 1779. May 27, 1779, Mr. Gwynn writes: "I have got the furnace in order fit for blowing, and have nothing to hinder our beginning, only waiting to get a little beforehand with iron ore. I would be very glad if you would come to see us before the end of the month, as I have something of great importance to talk to you about. If you possibly can, send us two potters, as we shall be in much want of them. Perhaps Mr. Coleman can spare some potters; would be glad if you could get old Curttis. N. B.—I expect to blow at the first of next month."

"Aug. 13, 1779—Per Peter Grum have sent you a load potware, assorted agreeable to your directions, as you will find by the within bill.

\* \* \* Our blast as yet has been tolerably lucky; I think by the time these reach your hand we will have made nearly 40 tons potware.  
\* \* \* Please to present my compliments to Mrs. Ege and Mr. Patton."

### ORDER FOR BOMB SHELLS.

Here is an interesting bit of information and must have been more

exciting when George Ege received it from William Gwynn, as those were exciting times for the Colonies. Addressing Mr. Ege, he writes.

Mary Ann Furnace, Aug. 31, 1780.—I embrace this opportunity of writing you per Mr. Voyge and inform you that I have contracted with Captain Toy to make 30 tons balls and 40 tons bomb shells to be delivered in Baltimore by Oct. 15, next, the balls at £25, and the shells at £50 per ton, or the current exchange at the time of payment, half the money to be paid as soon as the contract is filled and to wait for the other half one year with interest at £6 per hundred.

"Would be glad to hear from you what sort of contracts the gentlemen have made over the river, how much they have per ton, what sort of payments are made them and whether they expect to be paid in hard or Continental money.

"We have already half our quantity of balls made and sent a few loads of them off; Our iron, I believe, will suit very well for shells. We have made a few and as far as we have tried, all stand proof. I believe we shall be able to fulfill our contract within the time limit, but I fear I shall be scarce of money before I receive any on that account, as the sale of potware is very dull.

"Mr. Voyge tells me your are almost out of assortment of pots; if it suits you to take a load and load the wagon back with bar iron, would be glad if you would let me know by your brother as he returns, or the first opportunity, as we are almost out of assortments of iron. I remain, sir, with my compliments to Mrs. Ege, you most humble servant,

"WILLIAM GWYNN."

"To Mr. George Ege,  
"Charming Forge,  
"Favour of Mr. Voyge."

#### **MATERIAL FOR REVOLUTION.**

As further proof that our Charming Forge also participated in furnishing material aid to the cause of Independence, I quote from a letter to Mr. Ege from Matthias Slough, of Lancaster, under date of Feb. 25, 1779, as follows: "Enclosed you have an order from Col. Swope, directing you to deliver the three tons bar iron yet due him from you to Mr. Zantzinger and myself, which you will please to do as expeditiously as possible. \* \* \* I am sorry I could not get rye on more reasonable terms to supply you with, but instead of it being lower it is rising every day. My express is not yet returned from Maryland, so that I can say nothing about the pigs, etc."

Also the following:

"Lebanon, July 30, 1780.

"To George Ege, Esq., Ironmaster, Charming Forge; forwarded by Mr. Voyge.

"Dear Sir—When in Philadelphia I received a sum of cash for the purpose of sending to camp the wagons I had on hand. Procuring carters and several articles to equip them off, but none to pay old debt, but only for that particular purpose. As soon as I came home I examined the balance of your certificate, which appears to be £4,977-0-0, which I laid money by to pay, as I thought you might be in want of cash, which you should have received on Friday last had you called, and having the certificate with you; by any person you send the certificate, he shall receive the above sum, which I assure you is merely to oblige you, but can't pay any money without it. I have an order from Robert Coleman for one and a half tons bar iron. Please let me know when I can send for it, by the person you send for the cash. Enclosed you have a bill. I am, sir, your most humble servant.

ROBT. PATTON, D. M. I.

"I mean of your act on the certificate—not of the iron."

#### **BESET BY CREDITORS.**

Other interesting correspondence between various parties and Mr. Ege, now in my hand, are from W. Piersol, of Philadelphia, and Messrs. I. Wister, I. M. Price and C. I. Wister, also from Philadelphia, very strongly dunning Mr. Ege for the prompt payment of overdue notes. Likewise one from John G. Hiester, cashier of the Farmers' Bank, of Reading, urging the same plea for a note due Conrad Stouch. Another letter from William Coleman, of Cornwall, recommending Daniel Ramsey, as a good founder and blower of furnace, bringing up familiar prominent names of former days, in the years when George Ege made the Charming Forge, "near Womelsdorf," a conspicuous business center, even nation-wide, when the nation was born in the throes of revolution.

But we have left the most interesting document for the last. It is an indenture by which George Ege bought George Greenleaf, a mulatto boy, as a slave. The indenture in the first place witnessed that James Greenleaf, of Philadelphia, on June 22, 1797, bought this mulatto boy, then six years of age, of Samuel



Bettle, of Philadelphia, and board him as an apprentice, to be in due time taught the business of a waiter, clothed and kept, educated and taught to read and write the English language and arithmetic as far as the "rule of three," till he was 28 years of age, and at that time said James Greenleaf would provide George with two suits of clothes, one of which was to be new. Signed and sealed before Hilory Baker, mayor of the city of Philadelphia, and witnessed by John Stam, Samuel Bettle and Duncan Ingraham.

#### **SLAVE BOY ASSIGNED.**

James Greenleaf, however, assigned to Elizabeth Lawrence this indenture, who in turn gave it (and of course the slave boy, George Greenleaf) to Ann Penn Allen, who later became the wife of said James Greenleaf, who by deed of settlement, executed previous to this marriage of Greenleaf, reserved to herself the right of disposing of her property without James Greenleaf's control, had now deceased, when in February, 1802, Commodore John Barry, of Philadelphia, bought said slave boy from William Tilghman, Esq., of Philadelphia (one of Mrs. Ann Penn Allen Greenleaf's trustees), for the consideration of \$80. All of which is witnesser before Matthias Lawler, mayor.

But once more did this indenture and the mulatto slave boy change hands. The executors of Commodore John Barry, viz., Sarah Barry, John Leamy and Patrick Hayes, on Dec. 20, 1804, again sold said George

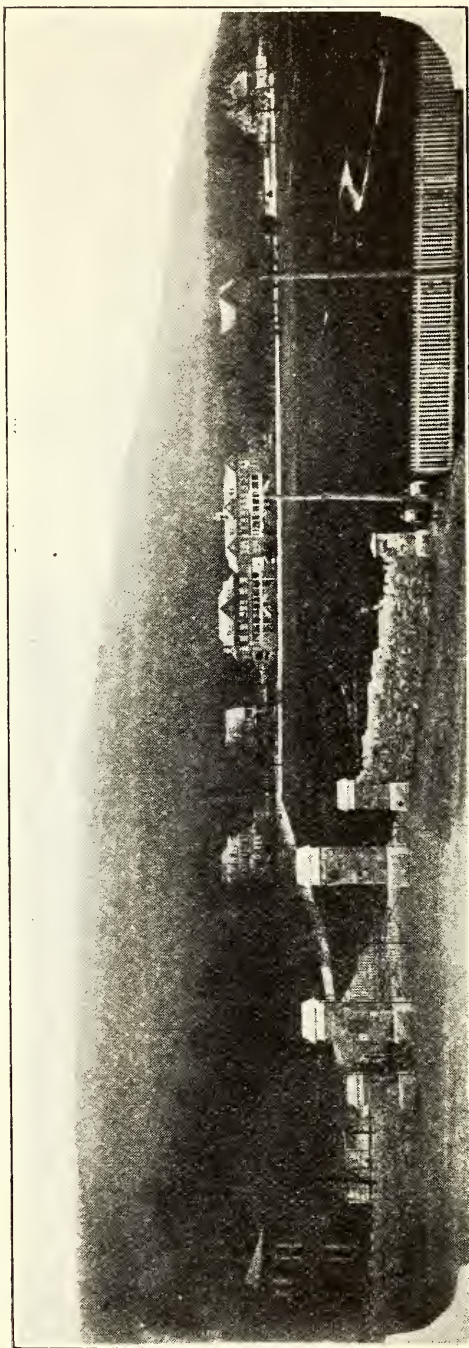
Greenleaf to George Ege for the consideration of the sum of \$25 for the residue of the term of servitude of the said George Greenleaf. Witnessed "the free will and consent of the said servant boy being first expressed" before Abraham Shoemaker, one of the aldermen of Philadelphia.

Thus have negro slaves and Hessian prisoners and an illustrious array of owners and ironmasters and a wide clientele of patrons, and the army of the Revolution, together with all the old ironmasters of this state been personally connected in some way with the long and checkered history of Charming Forge.

#### **MANSION STILL STANDS.**

The mansion and large stables, the dam and race course still abide. The forge itself is gone with its once stirring life and glowing fires. Only the local artist, the late Dr. Sallade, had preserved the likeness of it in a very creditable facsimile reproduction in oil on a painted canvas. The hammers are silent, but the waters still thunder and roar in their overflow and then babble and murmur on down their meandering course to the sea. The old laborers' cottages have been remodeled into the nature lovers' bungalows and the place is assuming the aspect, on a small scale, of a resort or recreation camp in summer, awaiting yet the poet and the painstaking historian to give it a new and abiding fame. Already the romancer has tried her hand.\*

\*Reading Eagle, June 5. 1910.



View of Bethany Orphans' Home



## Chapter VIII.

## BETHANY ORPHANS' HOME

Womelsdorf has another institution besides the industrial one just described, which has helped to put this town "upon the map." It is altogether different, however, from Charming Forge, in that it is not secular, but churchly, not forging the various forms and molds of iron, but molding and forging human character, by taking orphaned childhood in its molding years and shaping it to be stronger and more useful than all the varied forms of iron, by a process of Christian training and nurture in the blessed fires of true Christian charity and mercy. We refer to the Bethany Orphans' Home, located here, the orphanage of the Reformed Church of the United States. And fortunate the day for Womelsdorf when it located here!

There is no other occasion in all the year, whether industrial, political, educational or athletic, that annually attracts so many people to this community as the anniversaries of this blessed home of mercy and christian training. It is a common occurrence for years that on the last Thursday of August an influx of from 10,000 to 15,000 people come to visit the home and attend the elaborate program which the home and board of managers have set for that day. It is a great celebration for the entire eastern segment of the Reformed Church. It means a great deal to handle and feed such an immense crowd and from a score to a hundred ladies' aid societies of nearby churches assist the home population in taking care of the multitudes. Since the universal use of the automobile Womelsdorf has to put expert traffic managers at its street crossings to take care of the traffic and the crowds, while the Reading Railway Co. finds the handling of its many excursion trains not a little problem. Usually the well-trained children, together with a few select speakers, do the entertaining.

## HOW IT HAPPENED.

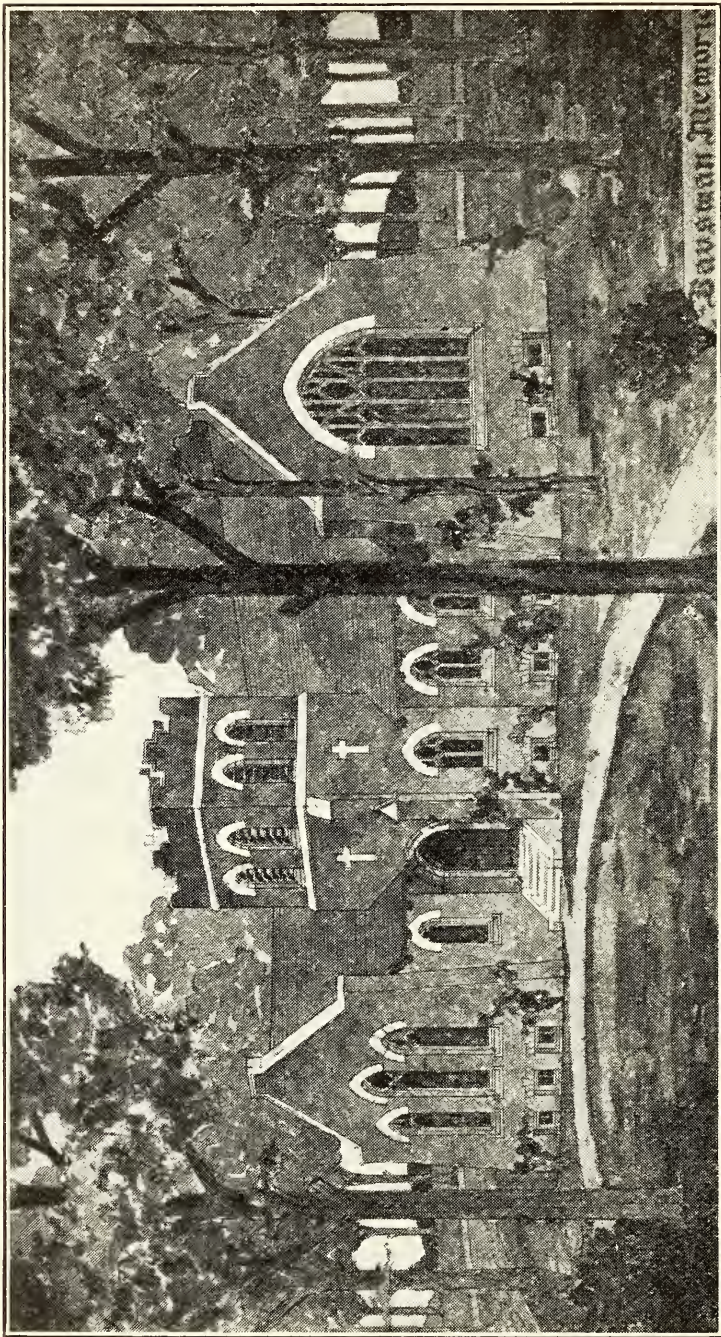
But how came this institution into being? And how came it to be located at Womelsdorf? This is the story I am about to tell, for it

is altogether too important a fact and exerts too benign and wide an influence and is too big a product of the church and has expanded too greatly from its small beginnings, and has published the town of Womelsdorf too extensively to be omitted from these "annals."

It came into existence during the period of the Civil War. Rev. Emanuel Boehringer, a German home missionary of the Reformed Church, was then laboring in the cities of Norfolk and Richmond, Va., when the hostility of the South to all northern sentiment and sympathy made even northern missionaries personae non gratae. Hence, obliged to leave his work in the South, Rev. Boehringer came to Philadelphia and began to issue and circulate a Sunday school paper, which he named *Lammerhirte*, in which he advocated the founding of an orphanage of the church, now more needed than ever, that the war was increasing the number of church orphans, which needed the church shepherding.

It happened that in March, 1863, he, together with Rev. John Gantenbein, of Baltimore, who had heartily seconded Rev. Boehringer's agitations, paid a visit to Rev. William A. Helffrich, of Fogelsville, Lehigh county. The matter of founding a church orphanage was heartily discussed and both Revs. Helffrich and Gantenbein pledged each the sum of \$100 for the purpose of making a small beginning. Agitations and publicity of the enterprise followed. In August of that year the *Lammerhirte*, with its 9,000 circulation, made a strong plea for the establishment of such a home. An elaborate plan was submitted, even a name suggested—The Orphans Home of the Shepherd of the Lambs (*Lammerhirte*). A synodic board was created. The home was presently founded and put into operation on a small scale, but upon the principles suggested in the appeal. A committee to take charge was appointed, consisting of Revs. John S. Kessler, of Allentown; John Gantenbein, now of Kreidersville; John Knelling, of Baltimore, and Emanuel Boehringer.





**The Bausman Memorial Chapel**



**SEED TAKES ROOT.**

The seed had taken root. Faith had planted it and Christian love was watering it. With only \$21.50 in the treasury, Rev. Boehringer on Sept. 21, 1863, took Caroline Engel, an orphan girl of six years, as the first Reformed Church protege into his own private home, 702 Morris street, Philadelphia, under his tender official care as shepherd. In October the synod, then in session, "commended" the enterprise to the prayers and contributions of the people by a special resolution. Pastor Boehringer pressed forward with confidence in God and man. Early in 1864 there were already 12 children in this "Shepherd Home." To his care of providing for the children the needed food and clothing and the daily teaching was added the responsibility of securing the funds. Teaching the Bible and the Heidelberg catechism, together with family worship, were daily occurrences. By prayer to God and solicitation of funds from his fellow churchmen, a steady though meagre stream of financial revenue soon began flowing into the institution. Both church and soldiers' orphans were alike admitted.

But the pastor's home was soon overcrowded, and already in the summer of 1864, steps were taken to secure a suitable home for an institution on a larger scale. Accordingly, a property was bought at Bridesburg, a suburb of Philadelphia, into which the orphan family soon moved. A successful canvass was made for funds and in a short time the debt was paid. Improvements and enlargements of this home followed. The orphans family increased. On the first anniversary of the home, that fall, Mrs. Boehringer died, and by a strange providence, in a little over a month afterward, the husband, the self-sacrificing Lammer Hirt, followed her to the tomb. They were buried side by side in the cemetery of Emmanuel's Reformed Church, Bridesburg.

**A SEVERE BLOW.**

This double death of the heads of this new child of the church was a severe blow. They, who had cared for the church orphans, now left six orphans themselves to be cared for. These were gladly taken into the nurture of the home the parents had created and founded for the church, until they were able to care for themselves.

Rev. John Gantenbein was elected as Rev. Boehringer's suc-

cessor. He labored diligently as superintendent of the home for a year and nine months, during which period staunch friends rose to the home's support; among whom may be especially named William D. Gross, of Philadelphia, who for many years since acted as the treasurer of the institution; Rev. Dr. B. Bausman, of Reading, long the president of the latter's board of managers, and Nicholas Wetzel, of Philadelphia, also long serving on the board. The institution was chartered. Large forward steps were made. Seventy children were already admitted in 1865.

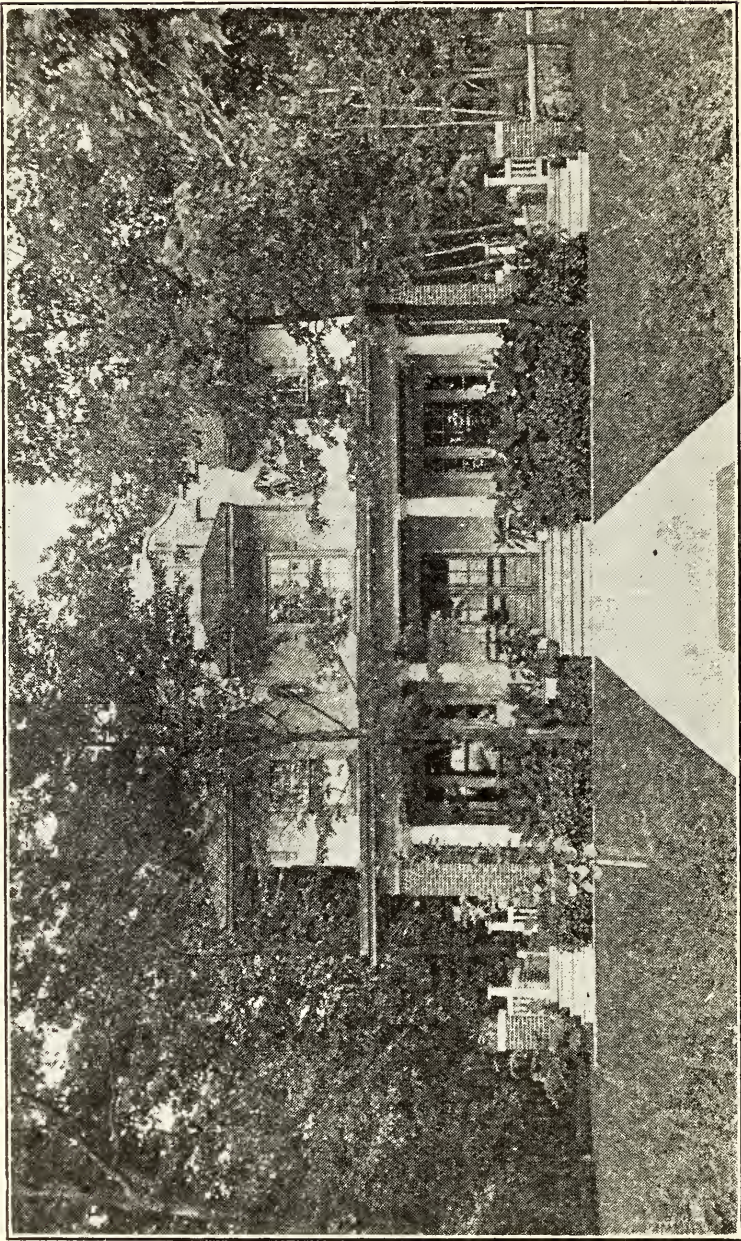
On Aug. 30, 1866, Rev. D. Y. Heisler, pastor at Bethlehem, succeeded Rev. Gantenbein as superintendent. The number of orphans admitted was still increasing, so that by January, 1867, there were 95, all of whom, together with three teachers, had to be supported. Often the home was in straitened circumstances, but in due time help and relief came. Believing prayer and earnest effort went hand in hand. Quarters were again found too small, with no room to spread out at Bridesburg. A new location had to be secured. When this became known numerous offers were made of lands and homes for the proposed site. Judge Krause, of near Norristown, offered his home and farm for sale. A farm near Allentown, another near Lyons, two near Sinking Spring and a 20-acre tract near Moselem, Berks county, by Nicholas Hunter.

**BUY WOMELSDORF TRACT.**

Finally the Manderbach Springs summer resort at the base of the South Mountain, near Womelsdorf, was also offered for sale. After careful investigation of the different sites offered, the board, on June 27, 1867, purchased the Manderbach Springs property for \$37,000. At the same meeting seven of the board members subscribed \$1,000 apiece, and others smaller amounts, which liberality won the heart and support of the Church.

The property then consisted of a three-story brick building, 120 feet long and 28 feet wide, with convenient outbuildings and over 26 acres of land. It was noted far and wide for a select class of patrons, who had resorted hither each year from Philadelphia and other cities during the hot summer months, on account of its fine spring waters, its superb scenery and its cool, refreshing climate. The mountain back of it was one vast park for these recreationists and paths threaded





The Applegate Lodge



through the hills in every direction, one a favorite climb to Eagle's Peak itself, being the highest elevation in Berks county, on whose summit a tower was erected, which afforded an unexcelled landscape view of the broad well-tilled, beautiful Lebanon and East Penn valleys. Without doubt, the board of managers had made the choicest selection for the new site of their growing orphanage.

#### MOVE INTO NEW QUARTERS.

On Oct. 1, 1867, the orphan family moved into their new quarters. It was a memorable day. The home consisted of 110 persons. Two passenger cars, four or five freight cars, gratuitously furnished the home by the Reading Railway Co., carried the entire family and household goods from Bridesburg to their new home. A large gathering of board members and visitors from the nearby churches and towns had gathered at the local railroad station to welcome their arrival and then, forming a procession, led by the Womelsdorf Band and the board members, conducted them to their new quarters.

The orphans sang a hymn, entitled "Our Dear Mountain Home," which song, in a new generation of inmates, has not become absolutely threadbare yet. Brief addresses followed this song. A repast was enjoyed, and, before nightfall all the visitors left for home, the beds and furniture having been set in order. That first night the orphan family slept well and since then 55 years of 365 nights each, plus one for each leap year, has this ever increasing and ever changing family of God's special children and their Christian shepherds and shepherdesses slept safely and sweetly under the three-fold shelter of God's paternal care and keeping, the mountain's strong and sheltering breast and the church's merciful and tender shepherd protection. The spirit of the inspired founder and first "Lammer Hirt" hovers over the home still.

#### FORMAL DEDICATION.

The formal dedication of the new home took place on Sunday, Oct. 29, of this same year, when appropriate religious services were held. A chapel was extemporized out of several rooms, which was filled with people from near and far. An elaborate program had been arranged. Rev. George Wolf, D. D., of Myerstown, led in the opening prayer. The orphans sang and Rev. John W. Nevin, D. D., of Lancaster, performed the dedicatory services,

while Revs. A. S. Leinbach and B. S. Schneck spoke in German, and Drs. Nevin and C. Z. Weiser in English. The latter's address was unique in that it traced the new home property from the hands of the Creator and first possessor to that of the Indians, when later a new epoch opened and it became the possession of William Penn (Brother Onas), who secured it in 1682, from whom it passed in 1729 to Conrad Weiser. Later it got into the hands of Henry M. Manderbach, and from him to the Reformed Church Orphans' Home, and so reverts again to God, the original owner.

The care of the home, its removal from Bridesburg to Womelsdorf, and the consequent labors to make the new home what it should be, so preyed upon Supt. Heisler's health that he felt constrained to resign his position in October, 1868. The board regretfully accepted his resignation, and at the same meeting elected Rev. D. B. Albright, of Orwigsburg, as his successor. The latter took charge on Nov. 12, 1868, when about 100 friends were present to welcome him and his wife. At a religious service held that afternoon, addresses were made by Rev. Heisler, C. H. Leinbach, J. S. Johnston, Thomas C. Leinbach and L. D. Lederman. Rev. Albright was officially installed on Dec. 26, 1868.

#### SUPERINTENDENT 17 YEARS.

He watched over the home for 17 years and 5 months. His term of service was characterized by the organization of a congregation in the home; the liquidation of the home's indebtedness in 1871; the purchase of the Manderbach farm of over 60 acres adjoining the home, with house, barn and old mill upon it, all for \$10,600; the farm house repaired and fitted into the superintendent's home; the payment of all this latter debt by 1881; the clearing and vast improvement of the farm land; the total destruction of the main edifice of the home, by fire, on the night of Nov. 11, 1881, and the passing out into life's callings—ministers, lawyers, merchants, mechanics, teachers, etc., of about 300 orphans.

Quick action on the part of the board, seconded by the church, at large, soon again after the ill-fated night of the fire, made the inmates of the home comfortable by providing temporary quarters and pushing the efforts to rebuild. An appeal was sent out to the churches for funds and very prompt and liberal was the response. Messrs. Gassert and Cilley, of Lebanon, got the contract for the erection of the new

building for their stipulated bid of \$20,366.99. The furnishings cost over \$6,000 more.

Dr. Bausman laid the corner stone of the new building in the spring of 1882, and Dr. E. E. Higbee made the principal address. At its dedication on Dec. 14, 1882, Rev. Dr. T. C. Porter, of Easton, delivered the address and in a week thereafter the home family was again removed into it, ready to spend Christmas in their new quarters.

### **NEW SUPERINTENDENT CHOSEN**

On Jan. 14, 1886, Rev. Albright resigned as superintendent, effective on April 1, 1886. Rev. Thomas M. Yundt and wife were chosen as successors, as superintendent and matron, respectively. They had been doing home mission work in Kansas City for about a year when the call came, but saw in it the hand of God and so accepted and entered upon their work on March 25, 1886. They continued their faithful and efficient services to the home for a period of 18 years, during which time the institution greatly expanded. These years of their administration are characterized by the organization of an advisory committee of women visitors to the home, with quarterly meetings for conference with the superintendent and matron as to the needs and conditions; the securing of a desirable burial plot on the Womelsdorf Union cemetery (the gift of Samuel Gable), where a number of orphan children, dying in the home since, have been interred, and a fine dark granite monument (the gift of Mr. and Mrs. P. F. Eisenbrown, of Reading), has been erected, and a number of additional buildings for larger accommodations and better equipment.

### **\$18,000 DORMITORY.**

Thus in 1887, a laundry was erected at a cost of \$1,300, and a new building for larger capacity work, made possible by a liberal gift of Charles Santee and therefore named "Santee Hall." Its total cost was \$18,000, and is now used as a girls' dormitory. Additional acres of woodland in proximity to the home were bought and paid for.

An interesting incident during Rev. Yundt's administration was the presence of John Wanamaker, then postmaster general of the United States, at the 29th anniversary, in 1892. It came about that William Lawfer, a prominent merchant of Allentown, and an active member of the Orphans' Home board, and Mr. Wanamaker were good and inti-

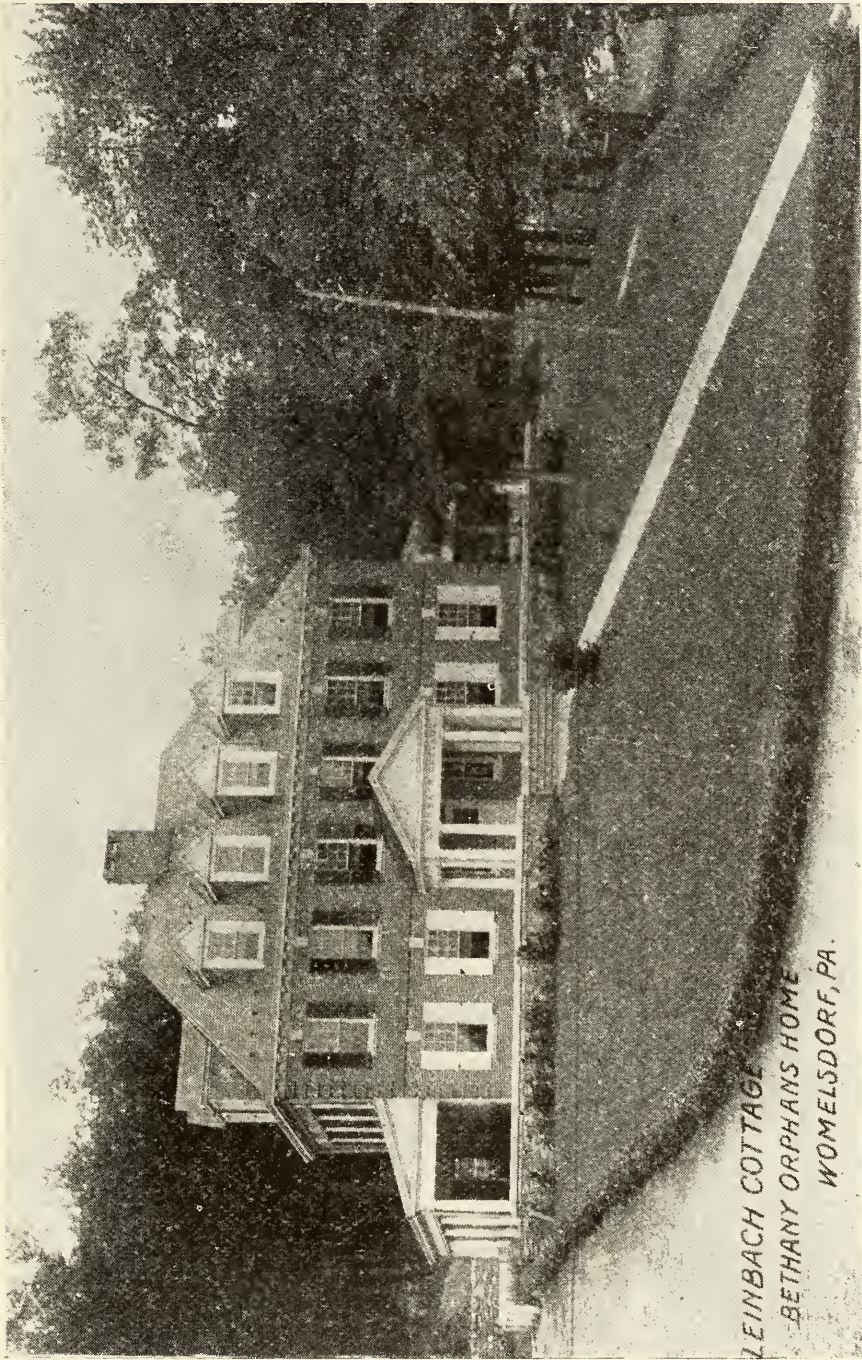
mate personal friends. Hence the former pressed the matter of inviting Mr. Wanamaker as the principal speaker at this forthcoming anniversary. His urgency and persistency won the postmaster general's consent. The day of the anniversary dawned. Immense excursion trains were steaming their way to this mid-summer Mecca of the Reformed Church. The countryside for many miles out had all its roads centering in Womelsdorf send clouds of dust into the air all forenoon, with all sorts of vehicles rolling on to the Bethany Home. The noon hour had passed and the afternoon's program of services and exercises had come, with more than 10,000 spectators on their semicircular woodland auditorium, or amphitheatre, extemporized seats, but no Wanamaker had yet arrived, at least not the prince of America's merchants by that name.

### **ARRIVE IN A SPECIAL.**

The other members of the board were dubious as to his coming; not so Mr. Lawfer. The last train from Harrisburg had passed and still the postmaster general had not arrived. All hope was now given up except that in Mr. Lawfer's mind and heart there was still one little flickering ray of hope's light. Mr. Wanamaker had promised to be present and he knew him to be a man of his word. Presently a lone locomotive came flying and whistling down the valley's twin steel rails. It slackened its speed as it approached the station and then came to a stop. A distinguished looking gentleman stepped off who was immediately picked up and driven post-haste to the home grounds. The expectant crowds cheered as he stepped to the platform just before his turn to speak on the program came. A train wreck between Washington and Harrisburg had delayed the arrival of Mr. Wanamaker's train at Harrisburg beyond the time of the last train's departure down the Lebanon Valley, so Mr. Wanamaker hired an engineer and locomotive of the Reading Railway Co., at Harrisburg at a cost of \$65, to take him post-haste to Womelsdorf in time to fill his appointment. His versatility and mastery of difficult situations had won out and his promise was redeemed and his good name of honor, for which Mr. Lawfer had contended, received no shock.

President Bausman gave the distinguished new arrival a fitting introduction to which Mr. Wanamaker made reply in part as follows: "I





LEINBACH COTTAGE  
BETHANY ORPHANS HOME  
WOMELSDORF, PA.



have always wanted the opportunity to come to Womelsdorf and see the children in the mountain, and when the persistent Lawfer asked me to come, I could not refuse. It is a great thing to build a steamship; it is a wonderful thing to build a railroad, but it is a greater thing to touch the life of a child, in whose hands are, perhaps the power of great things. I belong to the Presbyterian Church, but we have no homes like the one you have here. The German Reformed Church that my mother loved so dearly has been permitted to advance a step further and do a great work. The greatest thing for the world is to educate the little children to do better things than their fathers."

### **BOYS' SHOP ERECTED.**

The second building erected during Rev. Yundt's administration was the boys' shop, equipped for an industrial training school and workshop.

The third building came in 1896, the gift of Mrs. H. M. Housekeeper, of Philadelphia, as a memorial to her parents, and called the Frick cottage, devoted exclusively to the housing and care of little children of tenderest years, at a cost of \$6,000, which Rev. Dr. Bausman dedicated with a beautiful address at the 33d anniversary of the home, on Aug. 27, 1896.

During 1897 the new water works and reservoir were built at a cost of \$1,400.

A retaining wall, 650 feet long and about 7 feet high, was built back of the home buildings on the mountainside, greatly adding to the beauty, security and room of the home grounds.

The spring walls and pavilions followed next. A two-story school building came in 1901. It has four large rooms and two smaller ones, which may be used as library and museum. It cost nearly \$10,000.

In April, 1904, Rev. Yundt and wife resigned their respective positions as superintendent and matron. While their insistence caused the board to accept these resignations, they were both retained as members of the boards having the management in charge.

### **REV. MORE BECOMES HEAD.**

After casting about for a successor the board of managers elected Rev. Wilson F. More and wife to fill the vacancies and they were duly installed with appropriate services as successors to the offices of superintendent and matron on July 14, 1904.

Since their inauguration as heads of the institution many more improvements and expansions to the home have come. We mention the most salient. These are covered walks or bridges between the main buildings, a heating system for Santee Hall, bathing facilities for the boys and girls, the purchase in 1906 of the Bricker property, consisting of a two-story brick dwelling house and almost two acres of land, at a cost of \$1,285; the improvement of the farm house and other minor advances. And so have fine new buildings been erected.

In 1906 the fine colonial Leinbach cottage, for the exclusive use of girls of a certain age, was erected. It was occupied in the spring of 1907. The largest gift towards its erection came from George Leinbach and family, of Reading. While the exterior expansion was going on and keeping pace with the best years of its history, there stole in also among the ranks of its most devoted promoters that silent visitor, death, and bore away some of its staunchest supporters and workers. First came Rev. Dr. B. Bausman, for many years the untiring, wide-awake and devoted president of the board. He died in May, 1909, in his 86th year. What more natural than that a suitable memorial be erected for him? It came and took the form of a beautiful stone chapel at the edge of the woods, between the home and the station. It is most beautiful and altogether a most appropriate memorial, where religious services are regularly conducted by the orphan family and congregation.

### **DEATH OF REV. YUNDT.**

The next to end his labors was the former superintendent, Rev. Yundt, his death occurring in 1910, and a massive stone gateway to the grounds, with fitting entablature and shrubbery ornamentation, came as an appropriate memorial.

In 1911 Mrs. W. F. More, the superintendent's wife, had erected a beautiful home near the Bausman Chapel as the future superintendent's home and family residence, and presented it to the home as a memorial to her parents, George and Esther Applegate, and hence named Applegate Lodge. It is a handsome home, well set and provided with every modern convenience, and cost about \$5,000. When she died, a few years ago, she was laid to rest in a beautiful nature-adorned burial plot between the lodge and the chapel, where not only the bereft, but toiling companion of life may come for memory, solace and inspiration, but



also the orphan family to lament and remember the one who had been for many years known as "the orphans' mother." The fine Dietrich cottage was also erected during this period.

The Bethany hospital, with modern equipment, was built during 1911 and 1912, at a cost of \$9,000. The furnishings were extra, the gifts of individuals and congregations. A sewage disposal plant followed close on the heels of the hospital, and now this year of grace, 1922, is going up the handsome stone Catharine Moyer cottage, the gift of her son, Walter Moyer, of Reading, as a costly and appropriate memorial. Its use is to be for girls of a certain age.

### 60 YEARS OF SERVICE.

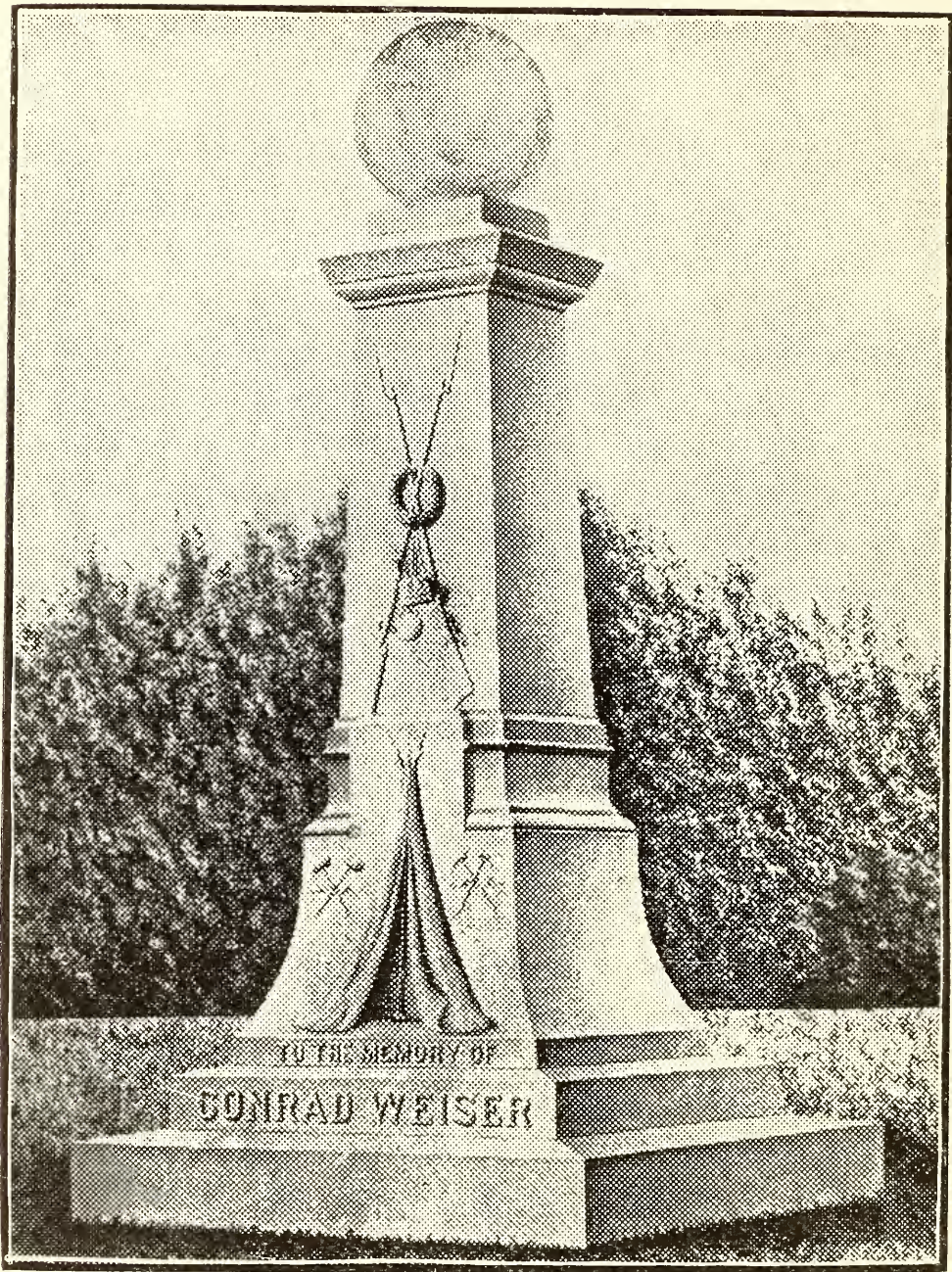
We have traced the birth, growth, changes, removals, expansions and outward development of the Bethany Orphans' Home, at Womelsdorf, during its now nearly 60 years of history, but who can record the busy daily inner life of this large family, or delineate in detail colors the routine workings of this institution as it goes on from day to day? Here go on daily the care, provision, nurture and personal training of now more than 200 young, helpless, or else rapidly developing and maturing orphan children. The tender hands of parents have been removed from them, and their guidance and training, bodily, mentally, morally

and spiritually, have fallen into the nurturing, conscientious care of these shepherds and shepherdesses, to whom as superintendent, matron, teachers and caretakers this great work has been committed by the church. It can easily be seen that it takes wisdom, alertness, consecration, loving devotion and tireless labors to secure all that is demanded—to feed, clothe, house, oversee, teach, train, direct hand and head and heart of so large and varied a household.

It is a real task that fills the hands of those in charge. Little thought and consideration are often given to this matter by the church at large. Only the recording angel of heaven has a complete record of the labors of love, the anxious thought and care and the many prayers to God, that are here offered in quiet by those entrusted with this great work. Only the consciousness that good is done in the Master's name, that over 1,200 children have been sent out from this home to bless the world in the various callings and professions of life can be a secret, inner reward for the laborers.

Bethany Orphanage has always proven itself a source of widespread blessing—a fountain like its own noted spring, sending forth streams of hallowed influence to the church and the world, for which location Womelsdorf is gratefully conscious.





**The Weiser Monument**



## Chapter IX.

### PATRIOTIC WOMELSDORF

A community may be judged by a number of standards. One may use any of the following measuring rods to take a town's measure and see if it is found wanting, viz.: Education, morality, religion, industry, architecture, business, intelligence, sociability, local civic pride and national patriotism. We want in this chapter to hold the yard-stick of patriotism alongside this westernmost borough of Berks and see how this community stands beside the test of its devotion to its country and especially its participation in all our national wars.

If our German forebears, who had fled from the Palatinate to escape the fire-brand and sword, imagined they had settled in a Canaan of peace and thus forever escaped war they must soon have been disillusioned by awakening out of their Utopian dream, for the first generation of settlers had not passed away before a long and cruel conflict between two Old World nations invaded the American colonies and was fought out to a finish on the virgin soil of this newly-settled continent. It would seem that the nations were yet far from the prospective time when they shall "learn war no more."

#### DOWN THROUGH HISTORY.

And war being looked upon as a necessary arbitrament between nations that cannot peacefully get along without, it is regarded a virtue in any nation's citizens to devote themselves to what are deemed a country's rights to the degree of volunteering one's services in battle, even at the risk of life. This patriotic fire and devotion and sacrifice of life for one's country has been lauded by orator, immortalized by sculptor and sung in hymns of praise ever since Moses and the children of Israel on the shores of the Red Sea sang their song of triumph to Jehovah for "throwing Pharaoh's chariots and his hosts, horse and rider, into the sea," or ever since Horace, the poet, sang the praises of the Roman warriors, who found it "sweet and glorious to die for one's country."

Measured, then, by this standard, Womelsdorf and community need

not blush, as its tests of valor and patriotic fire have not found it wanting. It has answered nobly every call to arms that the government has made, colonial or national.

The first war to be precipitated upon the early settlers of the Tulpehocken region was one in which their very firesides were again invaded, known generally as the French and Indian War. By crossing the Atlantic and settling permanently within the territory of the English Colonies they came under the English dominion and flag. And, of course, they accepted the situation, took the oath of allegiance to a sovereign who had protected and befriended them and even proclaimed this loyalty to the British crown in their documents and legendary inscriptions upon the sacred walls of at least one house of worship in these parts still standing. This is Hain's Church, Wernersville.

#### THE RIVAL CLAIMS.

Now when the belligerent controversy between England and France was also carried into the colonies of America, and the new contention of rights to the territory of what is now the United States was to be fought out here, these frontier settlers on the southern slopes and valleys of the Blue Ridge came in for their share of depredation and terror. The French had colonies in Canada and Louisiana, on the gulf, and claimed the country lying between, having established fortifications along their avenues of trade through the Mississippi River and its tributaries, while the English had planted colonies along the Atlantic seaboard, but were bringing their settlements gradually westward and claimed the territory westward indefinitely or to the western ocean. These two claims, of course, came in conflict and brought on a fierce and bloody war. This was accelerated by a grant of 600,000 acres of land in this disputed territory by the English to certain persons who associated under the title of the "Ohio Company," which soon brought on hostilities in the seat of these new settlements about Fort Pitt, which

culminated in the battle near the junction of the two streams forming the Ohio River, resulting in the defeat of the British, under Gen. Braddock, in 1755.

The Indians of the northwest were by misrepresentation united with the French cause and persuaded to attack the open frontier of the English through the Pennsylvania valleys, hoping to repossess the territory which was formerly theirs, and out of which they had been made to believe themselves swindled. And then came the storm of savage depredation and cruelty which broke upon all the line of frontier settlements in Pennsylvania, and thus also reached the Tulpehocken region and hinterland to the base of the Blue Mountains. Great loss of life and property resulted. Scores of families, between the Tulpehocken and the mountain, were massacred. Nearly all the old cemeteries of these settlements have victims of these savage butcheries buried in them. The alarm was sounded; strong pleadings for protection went out to the colonial government, at Philadelphia (See Rupp's "History of Berks and Lebanon Counties," pages 33-79), and a string of forts, on the southern slope of the Blue Mountains, were erected for protection, from the Delaware to the Susquehanna rivers. These were garrisoned with 25 companies, comprising about 1,400 men. But notwithstanding, these frequent incursions of the wily Indians occurred within these settlements during 1755, 1756 and 1757, spreading arson and murder and universal consternation in these sections.

#### **BUSY YEARS FOR WEISER.**

These were busy years for Conrad Weiser and his community. When not attending conferences and making treaties with the eastern confederation of Indian tribes, the Five Nations (later the Six Nations) and holding them in sympathy with the English, Weiser and most of his sons were kept busy day and night

in arousing the provincial government to action in personally organizing their community for defense. A number of divisional troops were organized within the county of Berks, of which Lieut.-Col. Conrad Weiser and his son Philip, as lieutenant, organized an extemporized battalion or regiment in the neighborhood of the Tulpehocken, of farmer folk, to march against the foe with their flint-lock muskets and even pitch forks and axes as weapons. By the time they reached Benjamin Spycker's residence, near the present Stouchsburg, the number had increased to about 300. Here Rev. Kurtz, then pastor of Christ Lutheran Church, and living a mile away, was sent for and "came and gave an exhortation to the men and made a prayer suitable to the time." Then 50 men were sent to Tolheo (the "Hole"—Hollow, back of the present Millersburg), in order to possess themselves of the gaps or narrows of the Swatara.

We quote further from Conrad Weiser's letter to Gov. Morris about this expedition, dated Oct. 27, 1755: "We marched about 10 miles that evening. My company had now increased to upwards of 300 men, mostly well armed, though about 20 men had nothing but axes and pitchforks. All unanimously agreed to die together and engage the enemy wherever they should meet them; never to enquire the number, but fight them and so obstruct their way of marching further into the inhabited parts, till others of our brethren come up and do the same, and so save the lives of our wives and children."

#### **TRUE PATRIOTISM.**

Here is patriotism, pure and true, and equal to that of the "embattled farmers" of Lexington of a later date. And this company included, doubtless, most if not all of the able-bodied men of the community about Womelsdorf. It looks like 100 per cent loyalty to their homes



and firesides and their government. They did strike for their altars and their fires, if not for the graves of their sires, God and their native land.

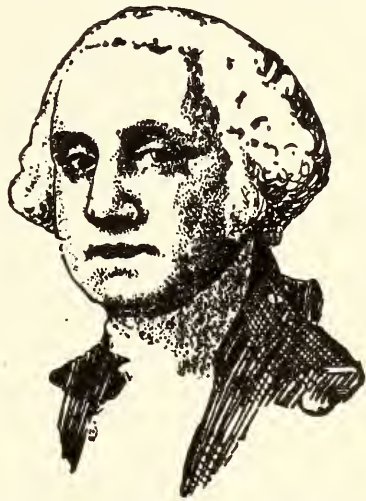
Another mark of the patriotism of this community is the fact that Gov. William Denny in June, 1759, while the war was still in progress, through Conrad Weiser as commissary, commanded this community to supply an immediate want of a number of wagons and horses for the transportation of provisions and other necessities for the army under the command of Brig. Gen. Stanwix, which was favorably responded to (see Rupp, page 218). This war had certainly encroached closely upon this community, for it is certain that about 150 inhabitants of Bethel and Tulpehocken townships, Berks county, were murdered during the eight years of this conflict, and 30 persons captured. It is claimed one of Weiser's sons died from wounds received in war, which we presume must have been Philip, who was a soldier in this war, and his death is given as 1761.

### **THEN THE REVOLUTION.**

The Revolutionary War of the united colonies against the mother country of England followed rapidly upon the heels of the French and Indian War. A little more than a decade after the termination of the former conflict, the harsher methods, stamp acts, duties imposed on tea, glass, paper, printers' colors, etc., without granting representation of the colonies in Parliament, had aroused the colonists to the injustice and tyranny of these acts by means of public meetings, which led to the discouragement of the importation of British goods. A strained relation followed between Parliament and the colonies. The "Boston Port Bill" was passed by Parliament. It led the colonies to unite in their opposition to acts of Parliament and to issue a call for a Provincial Congress. Public meetings were held

everywhere in sympathy with Boston and in opposition to Parliament.

The news reached Berks county. An indignation meeting was held at Reading July 2, 1774, where strong resolutions were adopted. Though still professing loyalty to the British sovereign, the meeting opposed the powers and acts of Parliament and enacted to take immediate local steps for the relief of Boston sufferers and to send deputies to the Provincial Congress. A committee was appointed to immediately raise provisions for the sufferers at Boston, among whom was Daniel Broadhead, a miller, of Heidelberg. From this



**The Father of His Country**

beginning to the close of the Revolution, the county and the Tulpehocken community about Womelsdorf actively participated in the struggle of the provinces.

### **COMPANIES RECRUITED.**

After the needs of the battle of Lexington reached these parts, a company of men was raised at once and sent out to the scene of conflict. "They wore crepe for a cockade as a token of sorrow for their brethren." Each township in the county resolved to raise and discipline a company of soldiers. Of the company raised in this Tulpehocken, or Womelsdorf community, it is not quite certain at this date which it was, for there were a number of companies recruited from these parts during the

progress of the war. The rising tide of the Revolution flowed quickly, and in every forward step toward independence this community was represented. In the Provincial Conference, which met in Carpenters' Hall, Philadelphia, from June 18 to 25, 1776, of the 10 deputies from the county of Berks, at least two were from this section, Benjamin Spyker and Col. Valentine Eckert, who lived on a farm just east of Womelsdorf.

When the militia of the county were organized, the officers of companies in this section were as follows: Heidelberg furnished the Sixth Company in the Fourth Battalion, with Conrad Eckert (a brother of Valentine), as captain; Adam Hain, first lieutenant; Peter Young, second lieutenant; Matthias Wenrich, ensign; Peter Kuhl and Simpson Hain, as court-martial men. In the Sixth Battalion, Henry Spyker, of Tulpehocken, was colonel; George Miller, lieutenant colonel; Michael Furrer, major; Frederick Ernst, adjutant; George Lechner, quartermaster, and Philip Finkel, sergeant. Among the various company men of this battalion we name the following men as from this Heidelberg section, viz.: Captains, John Leshner, Conrad Weiser, Philip Filbert; first lieutenants, Isaac Dupuy, Daniel Womelsdorf and Philip Mayer; second lieutenants, John Anspach, Henry Walter and Francis Artillia; ensigns, Valentine Reed, George Gensemer and Leonard Zerbe; court-martial men, Martin Stupp, Jacob Weiser, Jacob Seltzer, George Brown, Henry Knopp and Samuel Boyer.

#### **BERKS COMPANIES.**

We owe it to the painstaking historian, Morton L. Montgomery, that a tolerably complete roster of the companies and battalions of Berks county, which participated in active service in the Continental Army during the Revolution, has been constructed. This is found in his volume, "Berks County in the Revolution," from which we have most of our information. Culling from this

volume such names and companies as participated, we have for the Tulpehocken community such men as Peter Weiser, appointed Jan. 5, 1776, as third lieutenant in Capt. George Nagle's company, reporting at Cambridge in June or early July, 1775, and John Weiser, as private. Joseph Hiester, a young man of but 23 years, and chosen as one of the deputies to the Provincial Conference in Philadelphia, in 1776, years later governor of the state, came back to Reading and fired the community with patriotism, and in a spectacular manner organized a company and led them to the aid of Washington at Long Island. Then also Benjamin Weiser, the youngest son of Conrad Weiser, the interpreter, then a merchant at Womelsdorf, commanded a company of the four German companies in the German regiment of the Continental line. He appointed Jacob Bower, first lieutenant; George Schaeffer, second lieutenant, and Jacob Cramer, ensign, all from this vicinity. They saw service at Trenton Dec. 26, 1776, and at Princeton Jan. 3, 1777. In May it was in Sullivan's Division, which conducted a campaign against the Indians. In spring of 1780 it was stationed on frontiers of Northumberland county and discharged in the fall.

#### **COL. PATTON'S COMPANY.**

Col. John Patton, a prominent iron master of Heidelberg township, at the Berkshire Furnace, collected another company together at Womelsdorf, of which the following persons were officers: First major, Joseph Thornburgh; second major, Christian Lower; staff adjutant, Henry Spyker; quartermaster, George Lechner, and paymaster, Casper Reed—all men from this Tulpehocken region. Likewise did Capt. John Leshner organize a company out of men from Bethel and Tulpehocken townships, among whom are many familiar names from among the early settlers of this section. Two more companies sprang into life in this



western end of the county, one commanded by Capt. George Miller, the other by Capt. Michael Furrer; and all were in Capt. John Patton's battalion. They contain more of the sur-names of early settlers in this region.

The following roster is also preserved, viz.: Second Battalion of Berks County—Lieut. Jacob Rehrer, Sergt. George Gardner and Corporal Christian Snyder.

Privates—Philip Meisse, Simon Ragle, Michael Reed, Michael Mower,

John Spat, Philip Werner, John Manbeck, Henry Fitler, Michael Miller, Michael Sheffer, Sebastian Litch, Peter Klinger, John Weiss, Jacob Snyder, Jacob Kintzer, Peter Diffenback, John Lamm, Joseph Geissler, Jacob William, John Shuckert, Jacob Kercher, Matthias Smith, Lorentz Benitch and Peter Haas.

The names indicate they were residents of this region of the Tulpehocken. This company is reported as on duty guarding convention prisoners at Reading.





## Chapter X.

## PATRIOTIC WOMELSDORF

Continuing the story of Womelsdorf's patriotism during the Revolutionary struggle from the last chapter, it may be interesting to know that while Col. John Patton's battalion was collected together at Womelsdorf it was supplied with 1,068 rations, and that a record of its march from here to Perth Amboy was published at the time in the Berks and Schuylkill Journal. It was as follows:

"At Womelsdorf, from Aug. 1 to 9, 1776, getting cloth for tents and making tents. Aug. 11, marched at 12 m. from Womelsdorf to Sinking Spring, nine miles. Aug. 12, to Reading, five miles, and detained there by committee, 13th and 14th. Aug. 15, marched to Levan's (Kutztown), 18 miles. Aug. 16, to Bethlehem, 24 miles. Aug. 17, to Straw's Tavern, 15 miles. Next day, Sunday, remained there, raining all day. Aug. 19, marched to south branch of Raritan River, 20 miles. Aug. 20, to "Punch Bowl," 20 miles. Aug. 21, to Bonnamtown, 17 miles, and on 22d arrived at Perth Amboy, seven miles. Total distance marched, 135 miles."

Other enlistments of men from this section of Berks county, who served in the different regiments of the Continental line of Pennsylvania, are Samuel DeWees, of Heidelberg. "He was a captain in the 11th Regiment; also superintendent of certain hospitals. He died at Allentown in 1777."

## FORM COMPANY OF RIFLEMEN.

From the colonial records it is learned that Jacob Livingood, of Middletown (Womelsdorf), formed a company of riflemen, enlisted from Heidelberg township during the latter part of September, 1781. The executive council, in commissioning Capt. Livingood, took action Oct. 3, 1781, and ordered "that Capt. Jacob Livingood be appointed captain of a company of riflemen, enlisted to serve until the first day of January next; that he be commissioned accordingly, the said commission to continue in force until the first day of January next, unless sooner revoked by this council, and all emolu-

ments, pay and perquisites of the said office to cease on the first day of January, or when the same shall be so revoked; that the said commission bear date the twenty-first instant."

It is to be regretted that the roster of this company has not been found. But doubtless many of the names of the scores from these parts who served have not been tabulated, so as to survive the years that have passed. We know that Daniel Graeff lies buried in our cemetery, whose grave is marked as that of a Revolutionary soldier, and that he belonged to some Womelsdorf company.

Philip Moyer\* served in Major Buchard's Company in the German Regiment of the Continental Line Troops of Pennsylvania, commanded by Col. Weltner, in the Revolutionary War. He enlisted Sept. 5, 1776, to serve during the period of the war. His name appears on the muster roll of that organization from December, 1776, to December, 1780. Four companies of this regiment were raised in Pennsylvania. He was in Capt. George Miller's Co. of Berks County Militia, being on duty at South Amboy, N. J., during August and September, 1776, at the mouth of the Raritan River, opposite the southern extremity of Staten Island. We find the regiment at Trenton on that historic Christmas night of 1776, and at Princeton, Valley Forge, etc., later. Mr. Moyer was twice commissioned as lieutenant—as first lieutenant of the Eighth Co., Sixth Battalion, on May 17, 1777, and lieutenant of Sixth Co., Second Battalion, on May 10, 1780. (See Pennsylvania Archives, Second Series, Vol. XIV, page 276, and Fifth Series, Vol. V, page 1837.)

Philip Moyer was born in Germany, in 1737, and died near Womelsdorf in 1811. He married Maria Catharine Unruh, who was born in 1741 and died in 1811. To them were born the following children:

1. Maria Catharine, born Feb. 26, 1762; married Jacob Shenfelder.
2. Valentine, born December, 1762.

\* A son of Valentine Moyer. His mother was a daughter of Valentine Unruh (a son of George), one of the men who bought the Host Church ground.

3. Elizabeth, born Oct. 7, 1763; married Henry Herst.
  4. Daniel, born 1766; married Christina Backenstine.
  5. Jacob, born Dec. 15, 1770.
  6. Barbara, married John Scholl.
  7. Magdalena, born April 14, 1774; married John Ermentrout.
  8. Eva Elizabeth, born 1772; married Daniel Womelsdorf.
  9. Anna Maria, married (1), Isaac Collier; (2), George Sallade.
  10. Sophia, born Dec. 23, 1790; married John Smith, born Jan. 11, 1788; died Jan. 2, 1853.
- (Their daughter, Sarah, married John Haak, whose children were Sophia, John, Jacob, Franklin, Thomas, Fannie and Charles Van. Thomas Haak's daughter, Mary S., married Willis L. Bright, and is a prominent D. A. R. They reside at Bernville and have one daughter, Catharine.)
11. Anna Rosina.
  12. Mary Anna.

#### READS DECLARATION.

Step by step the community responded to the support of the patriotic cause of the colonies. After the Declaration of Independence was signed at Philadelphia, copies of it were sent out by resolution of Congress through the state board of safety to the various county seats, to be read on Monday, July 8, at 12 o'clock, when the election of delegates was to take place. This was accordingly done by Henry Vanderslice, the sheriff of the county, at the Court House on Penn Square, Reading.

We quote from Montgomery's works the names of colonels and captains only of companies from the townships of Tulpehocken and Heidelberg. In 1776 companies under Capts. John Ludwig, Benjamin Weiser and Conrad Eckert, of Heidelberg, were in service, and companies of Capts. John Leshar, George Miller, Michael Furrer and Nicholas Schaeffer, of Tulpehocken, participated in the war. In 1777 Capts.

Samuel DeWees, Daniel Broadhead, Conrad Eckert, Philip Filbert and Conrad Weiser (a grandson of the interpreter), of Heidelberg, saw service in the Schuylkill Valley in the campaign around about Philadelphia. During 1780 Col. Joseph Hiestler led into service six companies from Berks, of which Capt. Conrad Sherman, of Tulpehocken, and Capt. John Ludwig, of Heidelberg, commanded two. In October, 1781, a company of riflemen, numbering 83 men, was organized in the western end of the county and in service under the command of Capt. Jacob Livingood, of Heidelberg, already mentioned. At every recruiting of the army men from this section of the county were drawn from.

The community contributed also its general share in all the varied army supplies, consisting of such articles as grain, flour, hay, powder, clothing, accoutrements, horses and wagons. The writer has recently seen an account book of Henry Vanderslice, a master wagoner, or commissary, who records his visits to and his collections of supplies from the neighborhood of Womelsdorf.

#### A BERKS WAGON MASTER.

He is doubtless the Henry Vanderslice who was high sheriff of Berks county at the outbreak of the Revolution, and in 1777, 1778, etc., occupied the position as chief commissary of these parts. He signs himself as W. M. (wagon master). The Von Neidas, of town, are descendants of his and to them have come his army record books. These consist of two volumes of accounts, showing receipts and expenditures, the movements of his teams and wagoners, scouring the country in their collections of army supplies. The contents are a brilliant sidelight of the anxious days of the Revolutionary struggle, how the same reached every neighborhood and made it possible for everybody to do "his bit" to win the fight for independence.

Mr. Vanderslice received £6 (\$14.40) as monthly wages for his



services, beginning in March, 1777. His entries are interesting, showing him at Lebanon on Sunday, March 29, amid an all-day snowstorm, loading three teams with goods of Mark Bride (Bright?). On May 19, 1777, he reports from Morristown, N. J., that his "Brigad of waggons number 12, of which one is out of order and 11 in town fit for services." June 9 he was at Camp Middlebrook, with his teamsters scattered: John Messersmith was with Col. Chambers; Christian Zimmerman and Adam Feagly with Col. Lewis, of the 14th Virginia Regiment; Berney Wirt was with the Seventh Virginia Regiment; Ludwig Zimmerman with Gen. Conway; Adam Sharp with Capt. Chargaint, of the artillery; William Kanard and Christian Yeager were with the 15th Virginia Regiment; Peter Rees with Gen. Wain (Wayne); Jacob Sowerhaver with Col. Hobly, while Christian Borkey was with Gen. Macksfield's 12th Regiment, under Col. Martin. This entry is valuable, in that it gives us the names of Mr. Vanderslice's wagoners.

#### VANDERSLICE DIARY.

We quote from his diary: "We went from Reading the 18th of February, 1778, five teams via George Leader, George Schaeffer, Frederick Cougher, George Feight, Adam Knittle, Anthony Vanderslice, Jacob Weaver's Mill, in Earl township, Lanc. Co."

Also the following:

"At Womelsdorf town, Oct. 9, 1777.

s. p.

"To supper and breakfast....6

"To gil whisky.....1, 3.

"To gil whisky.....1, 3.

"To sum hay.....4

"Paid at Womelsdorf town,  
9th of October, for Mich.

Villenberger for his ex-  
pense .....11, 6.

"At Newmanstown, Oct. 9,  
1777, to 2 gils of whisky.. 2, 6.

"At Womelsdorf, Oct. 9,  
1777, to half a pint of  
whisky ..... 2, 6.

Nov. 7, 1777, Mr. Vanderslice is again at Womelsdorf and settles for "3 gins, 19 syders, 1 eating for 12 Hessians. Their expenses, £2, s. 1. p. o. He keeps for interne the Hessians, 1, 12, 6."

His itinerary found Mr. Vanderslice at Reading, Oct. 22, then at Rhemstown, Lancaster, Little York, Pennypacker, in rapid succession. How this neighborhood contributed in horses for the army can be learned from this account. Conrad Lantz contributed 1; Leonard Reed, 3; Adam Anspach, 1; Peter Deaffienbach, 1; Peter Anspach, 2; James Zellar, 2; Adam Sheets, 2; Jacob Eayberger, 2; John Anspach, 2; Frederick Winter, 2; Nicholas Herbert, 2; Martin Batdorff, 3; Peter Batdorf, 1; John Leininger, 2; Abraham Lick, 1; H. Lantz's Son, 1; George Yorck, 2; Jacob Read, 1; Daniel Read, 2; Matthew Nosserer, 4; Michael Read, 2; Jacob Kintzer, 2; William Kiser, 2; Peter Leise, 2; John Reis, 2; Michael Troutman, 1; Jacob Anspach, 2, and John Lorro, 1.

In February and March, 1778, (while Washington's army lay at Valley Forge), we find Mr. Vanderslice's teams again foraging (or collecting) for the army in these parts, Reading, "Berne" township, "Erle" township, Lancaster county, being mentioned. We quote:

#### WHEAT COVERED WITH STRAW.

"Jacob Kaufman Snider he has his wheat in little house, covered with straw, in Berne township. (Was there then already 'camouflage' by another name?) John Kershner he says that he can deliver here in Reading 1,000 bushels of wheat and rye and desires to have the chopping of it. Henry Phillips, 50 bushels of wheat, about 12 miles from Reading, in Berne township. Christian Houck, he having great quantity of wheat

not threshed. I am informed by Frederick Weber that Houck will not thresh his wheat till How (Howe) comes, June 14, 1778.

"On the 17th or 18th of June the English went out of Philadelphia in the Jerseys with part of their army. For news we went with Pason."

April 18, 1778, we find Mr. Vander-slice again at Womelsdorf, where he made some purchases and "paid Conrad Weiser, jr., for one day and night hay for one horse, 3s 9p. At Longdorff for one quart of syder, 1-3."

All the above is proof that the waves of the Revolution washed closely to this community of Womelsdorf and western Berks and found it generally loyal to the cause of liberty and independence.

#### **WAR OF 1812-15.**

The second war with England, generally known as the War of 1812, did not arouse such general excitement as the former, the Revolution. It was more a naval conflict carried on on the high seas, on Lake Erie and other waters, as it had originated about the question of Great Britain's right to stop U. S. vessels to search for seamen of English birth—though naturalized and become citizens of this country—and impress them into their service. This annoyance and humiliation was patiently borne for a while, but finally could be endured no longer. So it led to a second war with England.

Gov. Snyder, anticipating a declaration of war, issued an order on May 12, 1812, for the prompt raising of 14,000 troops. The war came on June 19 by President Madison's declaration. The battle of Lake Erie on Sept. 13, 1813, and Commodore Perry's brilliant victory, with his message to Gen. Harrison, "We have met the enemy and they are ours," greatly enthused Berks county and was celebrated by a great illumination in Reading on the night of the 27th.

#### **BERKS FOLK AROUSED.**

The destruction of the Capitol at Washington and the threatened attack on Baltimore by the enemy shortly afterward naturally stimulated the spirit of warfare in Pennsylvania, and in consequence a great number of her citizens rallied in her defense. The entire county of Berks was aroused. Eleven companies enlisted from our county and were classified with the Second brigade under the command of Maj. Gen. Daniel Udree, of Oley, in two regiments, the first commanded by Col. Jeremiah Shappell, of Windsor township, and the second by Lieut. Col. John Lotz, of Reading.

Eight of the companies of the First Regiment were commanded by the following Berks county captains: John May, John Mauger, Jacob Marshall, George Marx, George Ritter, Henry Willots, Jonathan Jones and George Zieber.

In the Second Regiment three captains were from Berks, viz.: Thomas Moore, John Christman and Gabriel Old.

At least a few of these names look familiar to the inhabitants of this Tulpehocken and Heidelberg section. A 12th company from Berks later was commanded by Capt. Daniel DeB. Keim. These companies did service about York and Wilmington, Del.

It is not known how many men, nor who, from this section volunteered and belonged to these troops, except that descendants of George Snyder, of Tulpehocken, have knowledge that he was one. The declaration of peace was grandly celebrated in Reading, Feb. 22, 1815.

#### **THE MEXICAN WAR.**

The question of the annexation of Texas to the United States brought on war with Mexico in May, 1846. Congress authorized President Polk to call for 50,000 volunteers for one year. This outbreak of war produced great excitement in Berks county. Town meetings were held



and the result was that three companies of Reading tendered their services to the President. The first company, the Reading Artillerists, commanded by Capt. Thomas S. Loeser, was accepted. They were accompanied to Philadelphia by a committee of prominent citizens and an abundant provision was made for themselves and their families by large appropriations by Reading's Council and county commissioners.

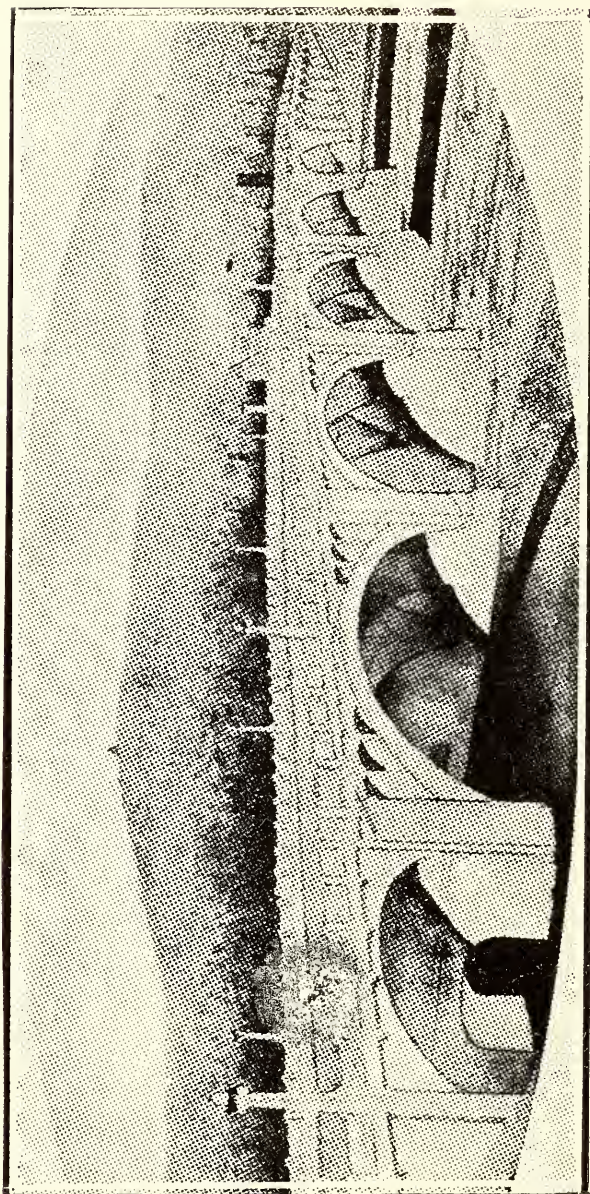
The course of travel for this company was by rail via Philadelphia, Harrisburg, Carlisle to Chambersburg, thence afoot to Pittsburgh. Here they were mustered into service and on Jan. 8, 1847, proceeded by the boat, Anthony Wayne, down the Ohio and Mississippi rivers to New Orleans, and served with distinction throughout the war, recognized for their bravery. They participated in the battles of Vera Cruz, March 19 to 28; Cerro Gordo, April 18; Chapultepec, Sept. 12, and Belen Gate, Sept. 13. The city of Mexico

was taken on Sept. 14 and the troops stationed there until Dec. 18.

#### PEACE DECLARED.

Then peace followed and they were ordered home in June, 1848, marching to Vera Cruz and thence transported to New Orleans. From thence they proceeded up the rivers to Pittsburgh, where they were mustered out on July 21, when they took packets and traveled by canal to Harrisburg, thence by railroad to Philadelphia and Reading, though some came by stage directly to Reading from Harrisburg.

Did they get a cheer when they passed through Womelsdorf? History does not say, nor does it make mention to the writer's knowledge that any from this section of the county were in the company. It is recorded that they got a brilliant reception in Reading on Aug. 29, when "buildings and streets were handsomely decorated with flags and wreaths."



Tramp, Tramp, Tramp, the Boys Went Marching



## Chapter XI.

## PATRIOTIC WOMELSDORF

## THE CIVIL WAR (1861-1865).

We come now, in our story of Womelsdorf in our national wars, to the next conflict that followed the Mexican War. This was the great internecine struggle between the North and the South of our own land, the Civil War between the loyal North and the seceding Confederate states of the South, which rose in rebellion against the Union. The question of negro salvery, which had been long and hotly debated, was brought to an issue at arms by the election to the presidency of Abraham Lincoln, who was an outspoken enemy of the extension of slavery and an advocate of its final but just abolition. His assumption of the office of president was preceded and followed by a number of southern states seceding from the Union, and soon followed by the firing upon Fort Sumpter on April 12, 1861, which brought on the war.

President Lincoln issued a call for 75,000 volunteers to suppress rebellion and all over the North the gallant and brave youth of the land sprang to arms. It is to the credit of Berks county that a company of its men were the first to answer this call by reporting in person at Washington. Capt. James McKnight's company of Ringgold Light Artillery, made up at Reading from men of Berks, Schuylkill and Lehigh counties, was the first military organization to reach Washington in response to the president's call, a historical fact well proven, which has given to this company the proud distinction of being called "The First Defenders."

## A WOMELSDORF COMPANY.

A little prompter action and Womelsdorf would have had a company of its own to accompany the Ringgold Light Artillery and thus share in the honor, for it was on April 24, 1861, that Co. E, of the 14th Regiment of Pennsylvania Volunteers, was mustered in, composed of men exclusively from this vicinity.

The following is the roster:

Captain, John C. Shearer; first lieutenant, John F. Schoener; second lieutenant, William G. Moore; first sergeant, George W. Steach; second sergeant, Cyrus Oberly; third sergeant, Henry Weighaman; fourth sergeant, William Weinhold; first corporal, James Gaul, second corporal, Henry Gotwald; third corporal, Levi Bennethum; fourth corporal, Elias Dougherty; musicians, John Daniels and Cyrus Hefflinger.

Privates—James Ayres, Henry Arnold, Samuel Burkhart, William Bennethum, Charles Bennethum, Jonathan Bennethum, John Brechtbill, John Clouser, \*Peter Copp, Jacob Deppen, David Dissinger, Levi DeHart, Isaac M. D. Fidler, William Fink, Charles Fosk, William Fry, William Gast, Henry Haywood, Henry Harp, William Hunias, Mandon Haak, Reuben Hendricks, John Hampton, Frederick Hoffman, William Himmelreich, John Haas, Samuel Klahr, Israel Koch, George Kuhns, Henry P. Koutz, Henry Kohrer, William Lash, John C. Liveringshouse, Benjamin Lash, Lawrence Meck, Elias Moyer, William Madary, Samuel Matthews, Augustus Milligsock, Milton B. Nice, Blue Owens, Samuel

Parsons, Frederick Putt, James Palm, Henry Rosenberger, Jacob Rose, Jeremiah Russel, Isaac Scholl, Emanuel Stoudt, Zadoc Smith, Michael Schaeffer, William W. Seidel, William Strause, Daniel Spatz, Cyrus Ulrich, Peter Weiss, Levi Weise, William W. Wenrich, George Weiser, William H. Wells, Samuel Whitaker and Percival Zechman.

#### ANOTHER RESPONSE.

But one company did not spell the patriotism of Womelsdorf nor satisfy the needs of the country as the war continued. The Rebellion was well organized and desperately determined. It took more than three months to put it down. New calls for troops were made and again Womelsdorf responded. The term of enlistment of Co. E having expired, a new company from these parts was mustered in and served as Co. B in the 93d Regiment of Pennsylvania Volunteers. Many of the former company re-enlisted. Of this company no complete roster can be given as many names are not remembered by my informant, but following are known:

Capt. Levi Weise, William Weise, William Hunias, Levi DeHart, David Bennethum, John H. Kintzer, John Leininger, Daniel Leininger, Nathan Burkholder, George Shartle, Samuel Hetrich, John Sellers, Adam Himmelberger and George Arnold.

The following served also in Co. D, of the 90th Regiment: Levi Bennethum and William Petree.

Some men made three and one even four enlistments before the war was over.

#### A WOMELSDORF BAND.

For a while a full band from Womelsdorf was with the 90th Regiment, but not in demand any longer, it was discharged later.

The following persons and many others, not now recalled, served in the 167th Regiment of Pennsylvania militia: In Co. A, Col. Knoderer's regiment, were Maj. Jon-

athan See; musicians, Peter Grimes and Elijah Dewalt.

Privates, William Bennethum, James Moyer, Francis Auman, Jared Bickel, Jeremiah Bennethum, George Kintzer, Alfred McAllister, Frederick Floto and Cyrus Ebeling.

In the 128th Regiment, P. V., James E. Moore; John Kendall, George L. Yost and others served.

Of the two companies that served in the 55th Regiment, P. V. and enlisted in latter part of 1861, we have a complete roster, as also of the emergency company, mustered in at the time of Lee's invasion into Pennsylvania. These were Companies B and D of the 55th Regiment. We name only the Womelsdorf "boys" except that the officers of Co. B were from Robesonia.

Co. B—Capt. John C. Shearer, First Lieut. George Parsons, Second Lieut. Adam Parsons, Jacob Deppen, Franklin Deppen, Elijah Dewalt, Henry Dewalt, William Fessler, John Grimes, Peter Grimes, William Hoffner, Abraham Hackman, George Hackman, Matthias Kalbach, John Kendan, Joseph Kissinger, Benjamin Kollerman, George Kollerman, William Madary, Franklin Miller, John A. Matthew, William Manderback, Morris Manderback, George N. Moyer, Frederick Putt, Mountain; Franklin Putt, Mountain; Josiah Rittenhouse, Mountain; James Reifsnnyder, William Reifsnnyder, Charles Rudy, Henry Rohrer, Samuel Startzer, Mountain; John Stamm, Elijah Smith; Francis Sallade, Amos Stoudt, Cyrus Ulrich, John Ulrich, George H. Valentine and George Williams.

#### COMPANY D OFFICERS.

Company D officers mustered into service Oct. 21, 1861, at Harrisburg, and re-enlisted Dec. 31, 1863, at Beaufort, S. C., included Capt. William G. Moore, last commander. He was appointed second lieutenant October, 1862; promoted to first lieutenant July, 1863, and to captain July 13, 1864. He was wounded May 20, 1864, at Foster's Plantation, Va.



First Lieut. John F. Schoener, who was appointed first lieutenant November, 1862, and resigned July 1, 1863, on account of disability.

Corp. Henry Gotwald, taken prisoner on May 16, 1864, and died in Georgia prison; William Arnold, wounded and died in Georgia prison; Henry Harp and Harry Weigaman.

#### A LIST OF PRIVATES.

Company D privates included Theodore J. Arnold, still living in Columbus; Henry W. Arnold, wounded May 16, 1864; J. Bennethum, taken prisoner May 16, 1864; George Bennethum, wounded and taken prisoner on May 16, 1864, died in Georgia prison; Daniel Bechtel, taken prisoner May 16, 1864, died in Georgia prison; Frank Betz, Newmans town, wounded May 16, 1864, at Drury's Bluff, Va.; James Fidler, died at Beaufort, S. C.; Lewis Fidler, Isaac Fidler, George Good, taken prisoners and recaptured May 16, 1864; James Kapp, William Leininger, mortally wounded May 16, 1864, died in Richmond; Albert Leininger, James E. Moore, John Newman, William S. Neff, taken prisoners May 16, 1864; William Parsons, Henry D. Smith, wounded at Pocotaligo, S. C., Oct. 22, 1862, Cold Harbor, Va., June 3, 1864; Isaac Smith, wounded at Cold Harbor, Va., June 3, 1864; Henry Squint, killed May 16, 1864, at Drury's Bluff, Va.; James White, wounded May 14, 1864, near Drury's Bluff, Va., died May 27, 1864, and Francis Yost. James Ayres and John Clouse of Co. E, were also killed in battle.

#### RECORD OF THE 55TH.

This 55th Regiment, commanded by Col. Richard White, a post of the Fourth Brigade, first division, 24th Corps (formerly the First Brigade), and second division, 18th Corps, took part in the following engagements: Edisto Island, S. C., March 29, 1862; Johns Island, S. C., May 10, 1862; Simmon's Bluff, S. C., May 26, 1862; Pocotaligo, S. C., Oct. 22,

1862; Old Town Creek, Va., May 9, 1864; Proctor's Creek, Va., May 13, 1864; Drury's Bluff, Va., May 14, 15 and 16, 1864; Foster's Plantation, Va., May 19 and 20, 1864; Cold Harbor, Va., June 1, 3 to 10, 1864; Cemetery Hill, before Petersburg, Va., July 30, 1864; Chapin's Farm, Va., Sept. 29, 1864; Darbytown Road, Va., Nov. 20, 1864; Hatcher's Run, Va., March 3, 1865; regiment captured 150 prisoners at Forts Gregg and Baldwin, Va., April 2, 1865; fall of Petersburg, Va., April 3, 1865; Appomattox Court House, Va., and Lee's surrender, Rice's Station, Va., April 6, 1865. The regiment was discharged Sept. 4, 1865.

At the time of Gen. Lee's invasion into Pennsylvania in June, 1863, the following emergency company of Womelsdorf boys enlisted within 24 hours of the governor's call and marched to Hagerstown and Williamsport, Md. in pursuit of retreating Gen. Lee's army. It was like an army of Spartans springing to arms. Had the battle of Gettysburg lasted one day more they would doubtless have had a part in that bloody encounter. The following is the complete roster, kindly furnished by one of them, Charles B. Kintzer, just as one of the few surviving veterans of Co. B, John A. Matthew, has furnished me the full roster of the preceding companies of the 55th Regiment:

#### ROSTER OF COMPANY K.

The roster of Co. K, 42 Regiment, Pennsylvania Volunteers, Militia, follows: Captain, Jacob Deppen; first lieutenant, George N. Moyer; second lieutenant, John A. Fidler; first sergeant, John Q. Seibert; sergeants, James E. Moore, William Hunias, John Q. Scharff and Franklin Fidler; corporals, Franklin B. Shartle, John Sallade, Adam J. Deppen, John Kendall, John K. Filbert, Stephen Sarge, George L. Yost and George R. Taylor; musicians, John F. Petree, George H. Valentine and Joseph Deppen.

Privates, Peter Althouse, James Anderson, William Anderson, John Arnold, Nathan Burkholder, John Bennethum, John Clouse, Franklin Filbert, Michael Filbert, Richard Fisher, John Grimes, Levi Hettinger, Jacob Hassler, John Jennings, Mathias Kalbach, David Kiebach, Charles B. Kintzer, James Krick, Monroe Kintzer, Isaac Klingler, Henry Kerns, Josiah Leininger, John N. Leavy, George F. Miller, Levi Moyer, John A. Matthews, Henry Mattis, John Mattis, Joseph H. Miller, Jacob McCormick, Lucian Potteiger, Abraham Paffenberger, George Reinoehl, Cyrus Reber, Charles Smith, Adam Strunck, Amos Stoudt, Daniel Sohl, Albert Siegfried, Gotlieb Schwartz, Charles Schaem, William Scharff, Richard Sohl, Richard Scheiry, Harry Taylor, Simon Von Nieda, Charles F. Wighamman and Elias Yonson.

Date of muster in is lost but in latter part of June 6. Discharged Aug. 11 and 13, 1863.

The date of muster has been lost, but the company entered the service the latter part of June, 1863, and was discharged Aug. 11 and 12, 1863.

#### **THOUSANDS RESPONDED.**

Berks men went to the war by the thousands. They encouraged appropriations of money and invested largely in national securities, which speaks of a spirit of national loyalty.

The county shared in the great war excitement and its organized effort to support the cause of which the president and Congress were leaders. Ladies' aid societies organized to provide for the comfort and welfare of the soldiers, local military hospitals, repeated calls for soldiers, the news of battle and the sorrow of loss and personal bereavements came to all parts of the country and were not absent in Womelsdorf.

#### **SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR.**

The causes and conduct of this war are well-known to this generation and, although it was a brief war

—all over in a summer (1898)—yet it was a great conflict, resulting in a great cost of treasure and lives and yet also in freeing Cuba of barbarity and tyranny and in bringing the islands of Porto Rico and the Philippine Archipelago under the folds of the American flag. It stirred the entire country and added glory to the flag, because of the naval victories at Manila and Santiago, and the military arms at San Juan and other places, in which every community contributed soldiers or sailors.

Womelsdorf gave Harry G. Long, George Heckaman, Jacob Stahl and Harry Lengle, and thus "remembered the Maine." The first and last named served in the 4th Pennsylvania Regiment, the other two in the 9th Regiment.

#### **THE WORLD WAR.**

The last and most cruel of all wars, the World War of 1914-18, in which more than a score of nationalists were engaged, and which nearly bled some of the great European powers to death, and practically bankrupted Europe and knocked off more than a score of royal crowns, dragged in also this country, which altruistically and for the sake of democracy gave up a score of billions of her treasure, nearly 100,000 of her gallant sons, wrung the hearts of all her men and women and left not a single community of this civilized land where it did not put its bloody hand.

Womelsdorf did its faithful 'bit' in every line of war measure and obligation.

Miss Laura Snyder, of town, who was secretary of the many war activities, has preserved a record of local activities which she hopes some time to publish, and has preserved a complete roster of the men who were called from this community to serve in this never-to-be-forgotten war, four of whom made the supreme sacrifice. We are indebted to her for this list of soldiers from Womelsdorf and community.



**ROLL OF HONOR.**

They were called and left town in the order here given: Lloyd Weidman, William Weik, Robert Filbert, John Filbert, John Livingood, Elwood Horne, Earl Leinbach, George Emerich, Martin Anderson, drowned in the Marne River, while acting as scout; Ben Grimes, William Mattes, jr., Harry Grimes, Luke Gerhart, Clyde Haak, Charles Schaeffer, Paul Deitrich, Herbert Fidler, Huber Hackman, Harry Anderson, Paul Wagner, Irwin Showers, Warren Bennethum, Ralph Strickler, R. Wright Hackman, Lawrence German, Louis Livingood and Calvin Rothermel, Harry Gruber, died in camp of influenza; John Kline, Thomas Schonour, Ray Swope, died in camp of influenza; George Moyer, jr., Lloyd Rothermel, killed in service; Edwin Kline, Walter Brossman, Harry Illig, William Keim, Paul Landis, Elmer Wartluft, Lewis Strause, Charles Illig, John Grimes, William German, George Bennethum, Robert Stricker, William Rupp.

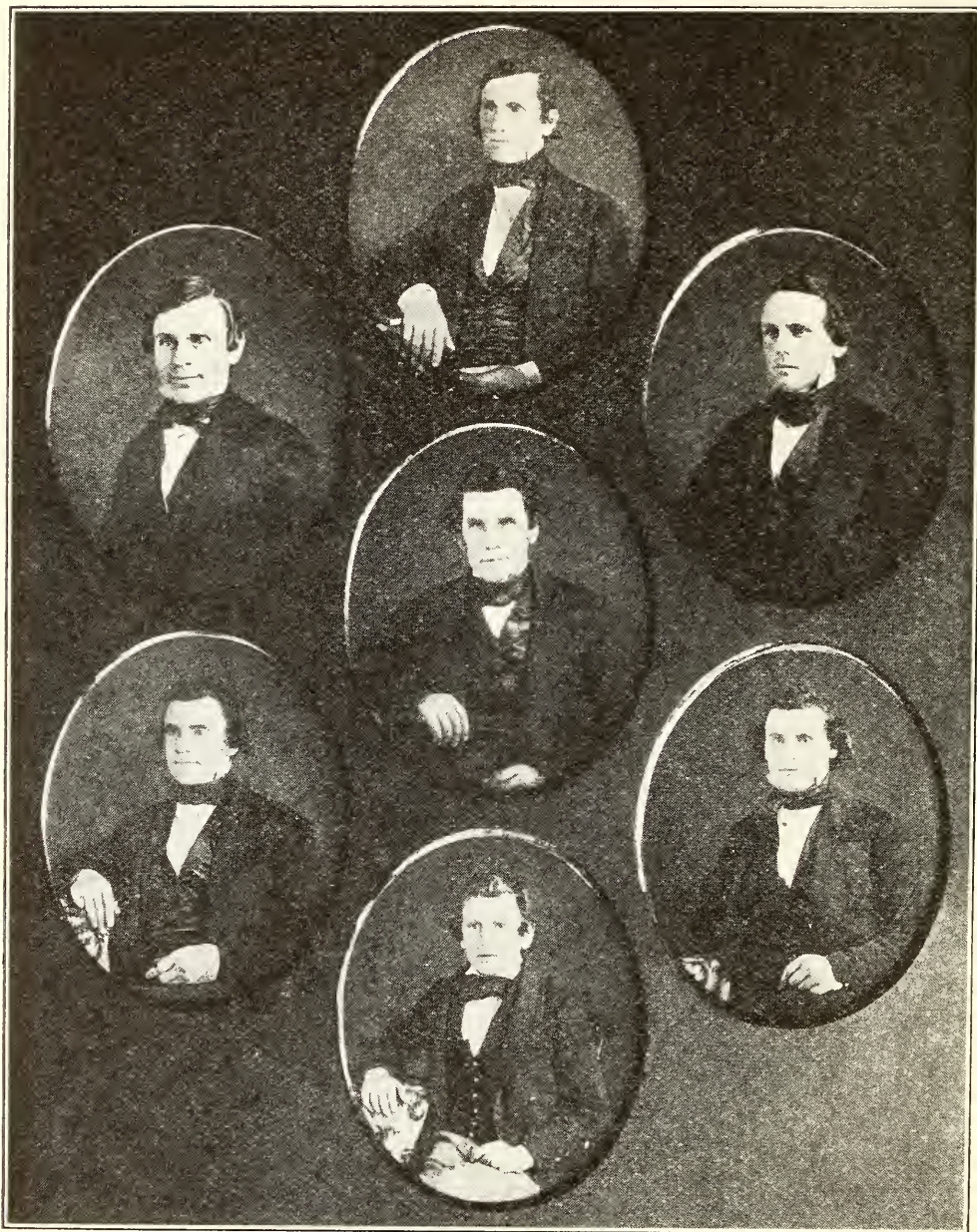
**MINGLED EMOTIONS.**

The sight of a starred roster, service flag or stone or bronze entablatured muster roll of the World War veterans, now so common, gives rise to mingled emotions. It tugs at our hearts and at the same time fills us with pride.

Womelsdorf, with its two sons dying in camp and brought home for burial here, and its two boys sleeping under the Flanders' poppies of France, like every other small community out of which has come the supreme sacrifice, "joins all America in answer to the fine poem on "Flanders' Fields" by repeating R. W. Lilliard's exquisite lines:

Rest ye in peace, ye Flanders' dead!  
The fight that ye so bravely led  
We've taken up! and we will keep  
True faith with you who lie asleep  
With each a cross to mark his bed,  
And poppies blowing overhead  
Where once his own life blood ran red!  
So let your rest be sweet and deep  
In Flanders' fields.

Fear not that ye have died for naught,  
The torch ye threw to us we caught!  
Ten million hands will hold it high,  
And Freedom's light shall never die!  
We've learned the lesson that ye taught  
In Flanders' fields.



**The Livingoods—Father and Six Sons**

	<b>JAMES C.</b>	
<b>JACOB S.</b>	<b>JOHN B. (Father)</b>	<b>MICHAEL T.</b>
<b>JOHN T.</b>	<b>WILLIAM H.</b>	<b>LOUIS A.</b>



## Chapter XII.

### NOTED AND SUCCESSFUL SONS AND DAUGHTERS

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As might be expected, a community that is so well stocked with good ancestral blood, enriched by Christian nurture in home and church, supplied with good local schools, in each succeeding generation from the very first, and provided with an abundant opportunity to attend the "University of Hard Knocks," as village and rural life always provides, ought to be able to show creditable specimens of its own home product.

This is found to be the case with the community of Womelsdorf. In the professional and honored walks of life are found not a few men and women who reflect honor upon their native community. Where elements of honesty, integrity, mental ability, lofty purpose and determination in its attainment are in demand, there many have been rewarded with success, fame and leadership, whose first round on the upward ladder was taken in Womelsdorf. We shall in the next few chapters seek to make a tolerably complete list of such as have climbed up its rounds to, or towards the top. That omissions will likely occur of names just as much entitled to honorable mention as those we give, is very certain, but this will be due simply because the writer has neither an oral nor documentary source of supplying this needed complete knowledge, covering so long a period. But enough names are known to him to supply a goodly sized list.

#### TRIBUTE TO MOTHERS.

Concerning the probability of missing many names worthy of mention in such a list, a correspondent, who himself has "made good," and hails from this general

Tulpehocken community, and whom the writer asked to supply a list of such name's from his own section, as might be classified under this heading has this to say: "I should be glad to assist you in whatever way I might be able to unearth some of the facts in history long since passed, but to write about the prominent men still living I have no desire. Some one has said: 'History cannot be correctly written until a century or two shall have passed by before the facts are committed to writing.' If I were even to mention names of such who have loomed into prominence I might make the greatest mistake, because their deeds have not yet been fully tested. Besides I might do a great injustice to many men, and women as well, who have accomplished great things for good and are practically forgotten. I feel convinced the greatest in the region you mentioned are the mothers, who have been heroines in their day and generations, have made the men practically what they are, and yet no one will arise to do them honor, while their names and deeds are forgotten."

Grave truths these! And fine tribute to motherhood in general! We take off our hats always in praise of the mothers of men. And here at the beginning of this chapter would write before and above every name distinguished and mentioned "To the memory and glory of that yet un-numbered and un-named Spartan host of mothers of this section—those pious, devoted, loving, unselfish and God-fearing home-builders—cemented in faith and feathered with love, who in the

valley of the Tulpehocken, for six generations, have sung their lullabies in plain Pennsylvania-German and whispered their morning and evening prayers in the same dialect (when not read from some one of their many printed prayer books) into the ear of the Infinite, who was ever real and near to them. To them we would rear a monument of loving recognition for their noble part in sending forth such regiments of actors into the world, to brighten and bless and advance it in things that are worth while."

#### COMMUNITY BUILDERS.

My correspondent, however, has picked up a list of names of his section of this general community, who would all come in for their share of glory, if all were told of those who have been community builders in the past.

"Some such are the Kurrs, Brobsts, Kurtzes, Schultzes, Schultzs, Illigs, Zimmermans, Leinbachs, Hendels, Moores, Mayses, Tryons, Walborns, Schoeners, Leisses, Schaffners, Millers, Snyders, Bordners, Reeds, Myers, Umbenhens, Ulrichs, Schmeltzers, Bowers, Burkholders, Fogelmans, Gerhards, Buckses, etc. There is such an array of names that I would not know where to draw the line, and the many unnamed, who would have equal claims upon the historian's consideration."

This is, indeed, the bewildering task. It is like looking into the starry heavens on a clear night to discern a few constellations of brighter stars, when presently the whole firmament seems sowed with a countless number of luminaries of such lustre that stars of first magnitude are lost in the bewildering host. And then is forced upon the star gazer the consciousness that the dimmest dot in the "Milky Way," if seen and measured by the same scale, might far outshine the nearer planets that dazzle you with their glory. But we will venture to name at least a few of the great host and then cover the

whole field by saying that these are but fair samples, while the woods are full of "and others."

#### BERKS CELEBRITIES.

Just as the county of Berks is proud of its celebrities that were either born within her borders or have at one time been housed and homed within it—such men as Daniel Boone, Conrad Weiser, the ancestors of President Abraham Lincoln on both his paternal and maternal sides; two or three governors of the state, Hiester, Schultze and Ritner; two ministers to Austria, Henry A. Muhlenberg and Glancey C. Jones; gallant officers in all our national wars, state and nation builders in our provincial, Revolutionary War and early federal government period, such as Edward Biddle, Edward Burd, Balzer Geehr, Henry Haller, Gabriel Hiester, Sebastian Levan, Abraham Lincoln, Jacob Morgan, father and son; Dr. Bodo Otto, Michael Lindenmuth and others; Gen. David McM. Gregg, of the Civil War; its early ironmasters, Mark Bird, George Ege, John Leshner, John Patton, Jonathan Potts, Daniel Udree and others; its great entomologist, Herman Strecker, and its past educators, with Nathan C. Schaeffer for many years the state's superintendent of public instruction, culminating in honor, and its noted ministers and lawyers, judges and doctors, as well as the ancestors of such famous women as Jane Addams, of Hull House fame, in Chicago, and Agnes Repplier, the authoress, of Philadelphia—so Womelsdorf and the community of the Tulpehocken is glad to point to its men and women of note that it sent forth into the broader arena.

#### FIRST SETTLERS.

To begin with, it had great characters among its first settlers. The enterprise, initiative and undertakings of such men as the Rieths, Zellers, Fidlers, Fischers, Walborns, Levenguths and Conrad Weiser match those of any colony of pio-



neers. The Spycker brothers, Benjamin and Peter, and the learned pastors, both of the Lutheran and Reformed faiths, who built up the early church life of this community, rank well with the leaders of any community in civic and religious affairs. During the Revolution its leaders were the sons of Conrad Weiser, the Eckerts, the Spyckers and others.

The Eckerts were two brothers, Valentine and Conrad, both born in Hanover, Germany, the former eight years old, the latter a babe in his mother's arms, when they emigrated to America with their parents in 1741 and settled on a farm just east of where Womelsdorf is now situated, known to the present day as the Eckert homestead. Valentine was naturalized in 1761. In June, 1776, he was chosen as one of the ten members from Berks to the provincial conference, and in July following a delegate to the provincial convention "which was assembled for the purpose of framing a new government founded on the authority of the people." For the years 1776 and 1779 he represented Berks in the provincial assembly of Pennsylvania. He offered his services in the Revolutionary War, and, being accepted, he commanded a cavalry company of the Associators for a while. He and his company fought in the battle of Germantown in October, 1777, where he was wounded. He next was substitute lieutenant and commissioner of army supplies of the county, and in 1781 was promoted to lieutenant of the county, serving to the close of the war. In 1784 he was appointed judge of the Court of Common Pleas of the county, serving for a term of seven years. He was brigade inspector of the Pennsylvania militia for Berks and continued for 20 years, from 1793 to 1813. About 1816 he moved to the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, and died in Winchester, Va., December, 1821, in his 88th year.

#### FARMER AND BLACKSMITH.

Conrad Eckert grew up east of Womelsdorf as a farmer and blacksmith. The Revolution drew him into military service and he commanded a company raised in Heidelberg township, a part of Col. Henry Haller's First Battalion. They were in the campaign of New Jersey in 1776. His company afterwards formed a part of Henry Spycker's battalion, taking part in the campaign about Germantown and White-marsh in the fall of 1777. He also was wounded at Germantown and never fully recovered his health afterwards. Upon his return from military service he continued farming on the old Eckert homestead till he died, Aug. 25, 1791. He was married to Elizabeth Hain and had a large family. Womelsdorf not yet having a church he was buried at the Hain Church.

John Peter Spycker, of the German Palatinate, emigrated to America with his family in 1738, coming by the port of Philadelphia, and settled in Tulpehocken township upon a large tract of land near where the present village of Stouchsburg is now situated. Of this family the father and two sons, Benjamin and Peter, were destined for many years to play a conspicuous part and exert a wide influence in this Tulpehocken settlement. The father was licensed as an Indian trader, but later took a leading part in the local agitations and conflicts during the French and Indian War. It was he that wrote a number of important letters to the governmental authorities at Philadelphia, still preserved (see Rupp's History), informing the government of the cruelties of the Indians and the sufferings of the people who had settled in the hinterland. He was an intimate associate of Conrad Weiser. He died on July 13, 1789, aged "77 years, 8 months and a half" according to his tombstone record in Tulpehocken Reformed cemetery (Trinity's old grave yard).

**THE SPYCKER BROTHERS.**

Benjamin Spycker, his son, served as an officer in the French and Indian War, was a member of the Provincial Conference of June 8, 1776, and of the Constitutional Convention. He was a justice of the peace for many years in Tulpehocken township, where he exerted a strong social and political influence. He was the progenitor of the Deckerts and Neads of this and the Cumberland valleys. He died in September, 1802, and is doubtless also buried in the Reformed cemetery of Tulpehocken (Trinity) Church.

Peter Spycker, a brother of Benjamin, was a farmer of Tulpehocken township for many years. In 1763 he was appointed one of the county judges and reappointed for a period of 26 years, until his death in August, 1789. In 1780 he was president of the county courts. Also was a justice of the peace for his township beginning 1777. He left a family of five children, of whom his son, Henry, is best known, who, like his father, was judge of the county courts in his day. He was paymaster of the militia of Berks from August, 1777, to the close of the Revolution. His name appears in the militia returns as colonel of the 6th Battalion and continued at the head of the militia until 1783. He represented the county in the General Assembly for the years 1785 and 1786. He carried on a general store business in Tulpehocken township until 1800, when he removed to Lewistown, Northumberland county, where he died.

**CONRAD WEISER'S SONS.**

All the sons of Conrad Weiser were public local leaders. Philip died young, generally reported as from wounds received in the French and Indian War. Both Peter and Samuel ("Sammy") are often mentioned in the father's correspondence and other documents during the exciting times of the French and

Indian and the Revolutionary War periods. But it was Benjamin, the youngest son, who figures most prominently during the Revolution. He had been a store keeper in Heidelberg (was it along the highway, near the old homestead, or in the then small village of Womelsdorf? It is known he lived in Womelsdorf at the time) for nearly 10 years when he was selected by the executive council as a captain of a company for the German regiment of the Continental line, which company was composed of men from this section. They participated in the battles of Trenton and Princeton, N. J. Later he removed with his family to the vicinity of the present Selinsgrove, where he figured soon as a justice of the peace. It may have been only a temporary residence, for a Benjamin Weiser represented Berks county in the general assembly in 1782. But it is believed he spent the latter half of his life in a vain attempt to recover his father's lost possessions in New York, and so drifted out of this community.

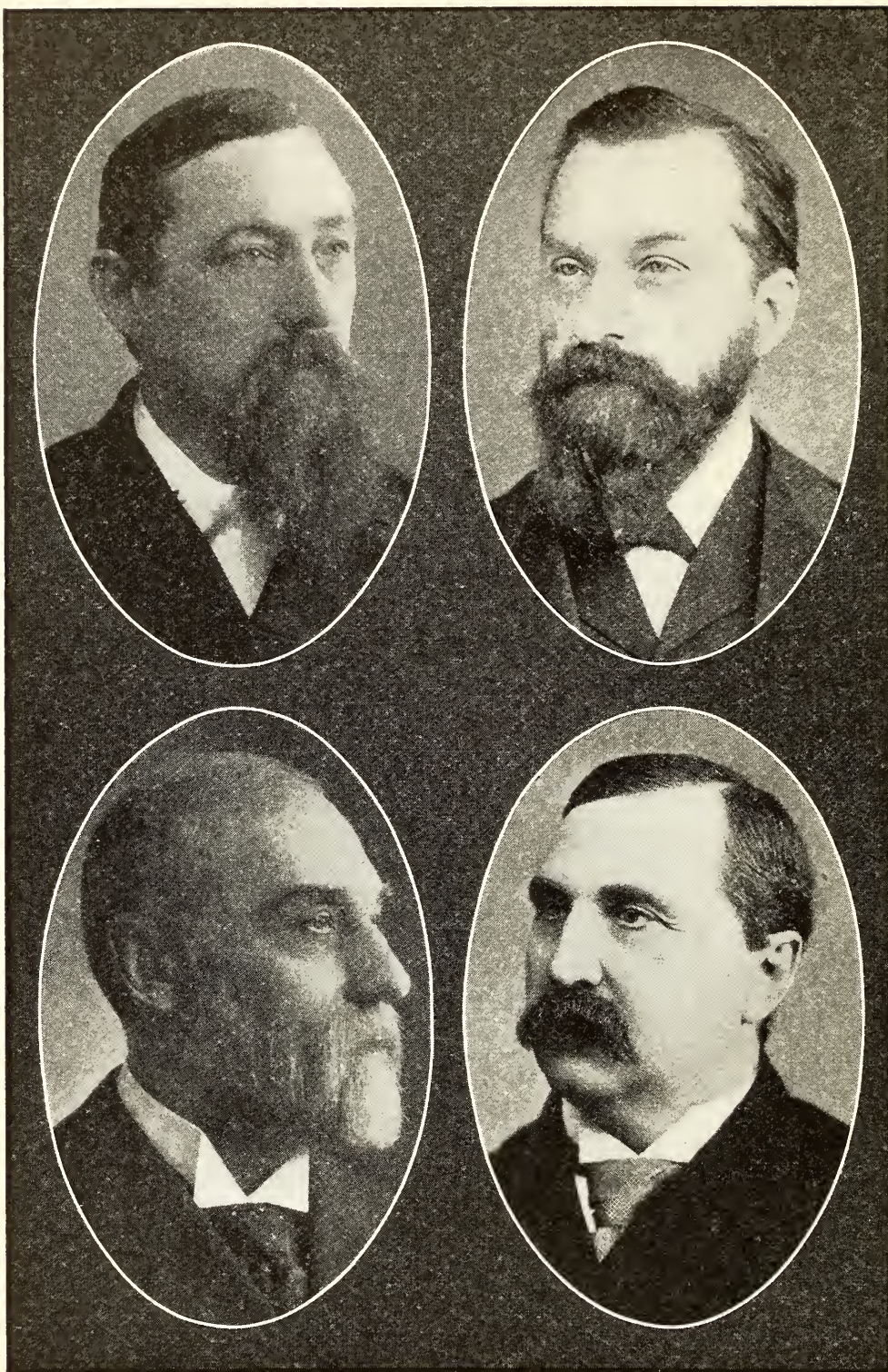
**SONS OF SETTLERS.**

Among other names deserving of mention, who exerted a local potent influence in this period may be mentioned George Ege (the ironmaster, already largely described in a former chapter), Jacob Livingood and Christian Lower. Both of the latter named were the sons of original settlers here on the Tulpehocken, the former at Livingood's Mill, situated on a branch of the Little Swatara, and the latter near the Tulpehocken stream. Both were actively connected with the Revolution, in that the former raised at Womelsdorf, a company of riflemen in 1781, and commanded them for a period of three months' service. He is said to have been so proud of his uniform that he died with it on, and, in obedience to his wishes was buried clad in same. He is buried in Christ Lutheran cemetery, west of Stouchsburg.



Mr. Lower was a colonel of one of the associated battalions, a commissioner from 1777 to 1779, serving as sub-lieutenant in supplying the county quota of troops from 1780 to the close of the war. He represented the county in the General Assembly of the state for nine years between 1779 and 1796. His father once owned the Moselem forge and his

three sisters were well married, Elizabeth to George Holstein. Magdalena to Michael Lei (Ley) and Catharine to Benjamin Spycker. When he died in 1807 he left a widow and seven children, well connected by future marriages. He and his father are interred in Tulpehocken Lutheran burial grounds.



**The Four Big Ermentrout Brothers**

**JUDGE JAMES N.  
HON. DANIEL**

**PROF. JOHN D.  
DR. SAMUEL C.**



### Chapter XIII.

## NOTED AND SUCCESSFUL SONS AND DAUGHTERS

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The passing of the 18th century, with the struggles for safety of life, home and property secured; liberty and independence won, and a new and federalized republican form of government set up, this community was settling down to the enjoyments of peace and the fruits of their brave endeavors for better conditions. The old leaders were passing away and, with the coming of a new century, new leaders came to the front.

In this town, the remnants of the Weiser family, the Womelsdorfs, the Shultzes — Frederick, a merchant, married to a Hiester, and John Andrew, a pastor and residing in town, and later elected to the Legislature and other offices, finally twice chosen as governor of the state—the Ermentrouts, the Seltzers, the Filberts, the Fidlers, the Bennethums, the Kintzers, the Plinys, the Reifsnymyers, the Kalbachs and other old families came to the leadership of the town and community of Womelsdorf. As the former generations had opened the first roads, erected the first churches and schools, protected the frontier and pushed it farther west and northward, and had fought the battles of community and Colonial safety and later those of freedom, independence and union, so the succeeding generations must develop the industries, build community centers of trade and education and worship, in other words, develop the internal progress of the community.

### COMMUNITY GROWTH.

Hence with the new century the growth of the town was developed, large hat factories were established here by the Ermentrouts and others, George Breneiser built grandfather

clocks, gunsmiths flourished; so did loom weaving and the artisan trades, a tannery and a brewery soon flourished, the canal was built, then the turnpike and stage routes established, Charming Forge did a flourishing business, more hotels and stores were built, a union church of the Reformed and Lutheran members of this town and community was built and the town grew and was steadily advanced. When President Washington and his party visited Womelsdorf for the first time, in the fall of 1793, there were still quite a number of Revolutionary soldiers hereabouts, who fittingly honored the president's visit with a military salute and an orderly gathering of citizens. An appropriate address of greeting, by John Pliny, a local merchant, gave evidence of his own ability and was a fitting expression of the intelligence and becoming order of the community.

There is scarcely a single name in the above list that did not send out a scion in the first or second generation to add luster to that name. The Ermentrouts gave to Berks county several sons whose names were written high upon the escutcheon. John S. Ermentrout was a leading educator, for three terms superintendent of her public schools, then a principal and later a professor of the Keystone State Normal School, at Kutztown. Daniel, a brilliant lawyer of the Reading bar, worked his way up through the county offices to the Legislature and then to Congress, where he served for six terms. Dr. Samuel C. Ermentrout was a noted physician of Reading, while James Nevin Ermentrout was for a long time judge of county courts. All of

these were the sons of William and Justina Ermentrout, of Womelsdorf, whose parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Ermentrout, lie buried in our cemetery. The name is yet an honored one in Reading and elsewhere, as some of the descendants are in the forefront of noble activities. We know Heber Ermentrout is head of Reading's Chamber of Commerce, one or two are members of the Berks county bar, and Mrs. Mae Ermentrout-Smith is sectional physical director of public schools, in the northwestern section of Chicago. We claim them all as Womelsdorf children and offspring.

We have recently learned, through the widow of the late Hon. Daniel Ermentrout, now residing in Philadelphia, that the late Baron Rudolph von Irntraut, a member of this family, who spent his closing years in New York City, had traced the family lineage back to 729 A. D., giving every father's name in the long line to 1339, and from that date on to the removal of the branch which migrated to America and settled near the present Womelsdorf in 1739, every father's and mother's name in each one of the genealogical generations down to the American settlement. They were barons of the Holy Roman Empire and loyal Roman Catholics down to the Reformation. They were noted for distinguished services rendered the government and were "nobles of the nobles." One of them was killed in a war with the Moors. The family arose in Nassau, Germany, but their castle was destroyed in the Thirty Years War.

#### **BIG ERMENTROUT QUARTET**

The American ancestors were John, Philip and Frederick, who came in the ship Samuel from Rotterdam and qualified in Philadelphia Aug. 27, 1739. They seem to have been brothers, and possibly only Johannes (John) was married at the time. They took up their residence here in the Tulpehocken settlement

and the family resided here for about a century, prospered and increased. Some of the ancestors are buried in our cemetery. Only after marriage did the parents of the above quartet of famous sons, called frequently the "wonderful Ermentrout brothers," move from here to Reading, where the family was reared and where the sons achieved greatness and fame, John S. reaching the top round of the ladder as an educator; Daniel serving conspicuously as congressman for six terms and dying in service; James Nevin for 23 years judge of Common Pleas Court of Berks county, also dying in service, and Dr. Samuel C., a noted physician, who, during the Franco-Prussian War, in 1870, served abroad in the German army with such skill that he was decorated by the old Emperor William I with several medals for various efficiencies, one for having fewer deaths in his hospital than any other surgeon in the army, and another for a new way of treating typhoid fever.

My informant also tells me that an uncle of this "remarkable quartet," John Ermentrout, of Womelsdorf, married Harriet Ege, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Michael Ege (she a sister of Governor Schultze), of Charming Forge, who had the distinguished honor of officially receiving the Marquis de Lafayette as the substitute of Mrs. Governor Schultze, who was an invalid at the time when that official of the state received the distinguished French general at the gubernatorial mansion, in 1824, the time of Lafayette's visit to America.

This Harriet Ege Ermentrout's only daughter is reported as a very charming and superior character, beloved by every one who knew her, and gave my informant the statement that they were neighbors of the Eckerts, but that the elder Ermentrouths were a bookish people, studious and lived more to themselves, while the Eckerts evidently were more public in their tastes—what we of today would call "good mixers."



It is intensely interesting to have these old neighborhood whiffs of gossip and old-time news blow our way in this fashion, and we are simply surprised and elated to know what lofty and worthy characters lived hereabouts in the long ago—the von Neidas, the von Irmitrouts, the Eges, the Hiesters, the Schultzes, the Weisers and the Muhlenbergs, etc., and what hallowed dust and ashes our old cemeteries hold.

#### WEISERS AND MUHLENBERGS.

So are the Weisers and the Muhlenbergs, which, for a succession of generations to the present one, have kept themselves at the very front of the varied callings and honored professions, the children of this town and community. But we shall devote a chapter to this family alone.

Among other names wielding an influence here, at the beginning and during the first third of the 19th century, were Rev. Dr. William Hendel, the Reformed minister, an eloquent preacher and a moulding influence in his synod; the second and third generation of Weisers; Dr. Robert Woods, the local doctor; the Eges of the Charming Forge, George for 28 years a judge of our county courts; Peter Eckert and Peter Womelsdorf, son of the founder of the town and a soldier of the War of 1812-15; the Ritschards (Richards); John Benne-thum; the two Ermentrouts, Christopher and Johannes; Frederick A. Schulze, the merchant; the elder Sallades, Reeds, Seiberts, Bucks, Fidders, Laucks, Livingoods and others.

Conrad Stouch kept the Central Hotel and with Calder, of Harrisburg, owned the old stage line then running between Reading and Harrisburg. They all lived here and are here buried, and whatever noted sons or daughters of this stock have blessed and gladdened humanity must be credited to our town and community. John Pliny, the Moores, Eckerts, Hirsch and Frederick A. Schulze were in business here, while the Tryons and John Livingood were the doctors.

#### LIVINGOOD FAMILY.

John B. Livingood was a student of Dr. Michael Tryon (his wife being Elizabeth Seltzer), whose daughter he married and became the ancestor of an illustrious line of professional men, mostly doctors and lawyers. He practiced medicine in Womelsdorf from 1812 to 1872. He was the father of John T. Livingood, who died in 1852, a young man of 30, in San Francisco, Cal.; of James C. and Louis A. Livingood, both life-long residents and skilled and widely-known physicians, practicing all their life at Womelsdorf.

He was also the father of another son, a doctor, who practiced medicine in Sinking Spring for a while, and later moved to Rossville, Illinois, where, after years of practice, he died about 1900, and there is buried, viz., Michael T. Livingood. Two other sons, Jacob Seltzer Livingood and William H. Livingood, both were eminent lawyers of Reading, Pa. The former was prominent at the Berks county bar from 1845 to 1906, whose two sons, Frank S. and Edwin S. Livingood, follow in their father's footsteps and are among the best known lawyers and social and religious betterment workers of Reading, while their brother, Charles J. Livingood, of Cincinnati, O., is the legal trustee of a large estate. Another son of Jacob Seltzer Livingood, Louis E., a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania as an M. D., went to an untimely death at sea in the sinking of the Burgoyne on July 4, 1898. Still another son, Henry S., a graduate of the Freiberg University, of Saxony, as a mining engineer, died in 1892. Two daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Jacob S. Livingood, survive and reside in Reading, Pa., viz., Miss Ella C. Livingood and Mrs. Alice M. Surls, the widow of the late Joseph K. Surls.

The other son of John B. Livingood, the medical ancestor, was William H. Livingood, a noted lawyer from 1860 to 1906. A son of Dr. Louis A. Livingood, took up his

father's profession and field, Dr. Horace F. Livingood, and carried on a wide practice in and about Womelsdorf until his death, in 1915. He left two sons, John and Louis A., the former practicing in Reading and the latter in the old field of Womelsdorf, thus carrying forward this art of healing into the fourth generation. Another physician of this stock is Dr. William W. Livingood, of Robesonia, the son of William H. and Anna Livingood, of Reading, where he formerly practiced, but lately gave up the practice for fruit and poultry business, and for this reason he has taken up his residence at Robesonia.

Like all families, in the course of time, the Livingood family has become connected by marriage with a long list of other family names. We have counted over 70 collateral surnames, among whom are quite a number who have achieved distinction in the professions—of medicine at least seven, and in that of the ministry at least three, and in the business affairs of life not a few. But the Livingoods excel them all in the professions of law and of the healing art. We have counted no less than a dozen "Doctor Livingoods" in only four generations, from Dr. John Bricker Livingood, of Womelsdorf, down to Louis A. Livingood, of today, whose shingle hangs out at the old stand in our town. The lawyers number five.

#### **A CALIFORNIA EDITOR.**

Another doctor's fame and family early added distinction to the name of Womelsdorf. It is that of Dr. John Moore. He lived long at the corner of High and Second streets, in town, and practiced his profession in all this section. He was widely known and respected. His brother, James, long carried on a successful store business in town, while his sons, Capt. William G., Thomas and Frank, were successful in their varied lines of business, extensive farmer and horse dealer, mercantile and railroading. One grandson is still among our best citizens. William M. S.

Moore, long assisting his father and now devoted to farming, while another granddaughter Mayme and grandson Paul live in Redlands, Cal., where the latter is proprietor and editor of a daily newspaper, the Redlands Daily Facts.

A daughter of Dr. Moore's, Fannie, married Rev. Frederick G. Pilgrim, of the Reformed Church and served pastorates, the last one being at Lititz. Both are now sleeping in the family burial plot here, after a useful career.

The Seltzer name has added distinction to our town. Not only is it an old name and connected with the Livingood, Moore and many other brands of good stock, but by its own patronymic have sons and daughters arisen to do it honor. Franklin P. Seltzer left Womelsdorf, his native town, to become one of the pioneer settlers of Crestline, O., later removing to Philadelphia, where he was for many years one of its most successful merchants. Here his son, Dr. Charles Meck Seltzer, has long been one of its most famous physicians and medical lecturers. Likewise did Jonathan R. Seltzer, a son of William Seltzer, of Womelsdorf, establish in Philadelphia a prosperous hardware business, that under the firm name of Seltzer-Klahr Co., developed a trade that extends throughout Pennsylvania and adjacent states. Two sons of the late George Seltzer, of town, have gained quite a name and extensive practice in the legal profession, the one at the Pottsville and the other at the Reading bar.

#### **FOUNDED FIRST SUNDAY SCHOOL.**

The Stephen family has added to the luster of Womelsdorf's good name. Early in the past century Walker Stephen came to town as a young school teacher. He was one born to be a teacher and did much for the uplift of educational standards in town. He was the founder of the first Sunday school in town, connected with the Presbyterian Church, of which he was a member.



He promoted the town academy and furthered every laudable means of community enlightenment. He served as torch-bearer of light and love for many decades, and when aged he was looked upon as a veritable saint, and highly esteemed by everybody. The children all loved him and many have carried his image in their mental lockers through long years of pilgrimage.

His son, John Stephen, was a noted doctor here for years, and here lies buried. One of his daughters married Prof. John B. Quimby, his assistant and successor, through which name the Stephen blood descended to the next generation in the kindly and successful services of two sons of this union. The one of these was Rev. Alden Walker Quimby, born in Womelsdorf in 1854, a Methodist minister, serving churches at Bainbridge, Radnor and for 26 years the pastor of the Berwyn Methodist Episcopal Church, near Philadelphia, who, perhaps, was better known as an author and scientist even than as a preacher, for he wrote on many historical subjects, was author of two novels and published astronomical observations, reporting them regularly to the Polytechnium at Zurich, Switzerland. He died Sept. 12, of this year, in Philadelphia. His brother, Henry Quimby, is a noted structural engineer of Philadelphia, and is at present employed in the bridge construction across the Delaware, at Philadelphia. A grandson of Dr. John Stephen is at present druggist of Reading and writer of folk-lore, history and old neighborhood events of Berks county, Walker L. Stephen.

#### RECALLED IN POEM.

Another teacher, whose name is often spoken and whose memory is revered by scores and scores of his successful pupils, is the late Prof. John S. Krumbine, the successor of Walker Stephen and the life and personification of the Womelsdorf academy. M. A. Gruber, of Washington, D. C., recalls those happy

years of academy life and its teacher and pupils in a lengthy Pennsylvania German poem that shows the influence this teacher exerted. (See Pennsylvania German Mag, Vol. V. p. 73.) He must have been a born teacher from the way his name is frequently spoken by many of his former pupils, who will not let it perish while one of them is alive, or a brick remains in the old wall, now remodeled into a dwelling house and occupied by Adam Lengle and his family, on North First street.

The successful lives of these scores of pupils, who are still surviving the long past close of Prof. Krumbine's early school days, are the best comments upon the character of the work of this "Old Domsey" of former Womelsdorf. Of them many, most, have made good. His own son, Elmer, gained a name the world over as an acrobat, whose Belgian wife, now a widow, and her family are still living in our midst.

#### QUOTA OF PREACHERS.

Of preachers and preachers' wives, Womelsdorf and community has furnished its quota. The parsonages at Tulpehocken have given their proportion. The yield of the Christ Lutheran parsonage were Rev. J. Daniel Kurtz, D. D., of Baltimore reputation, and J. Andrew Schulze, afterward governor of Pennsylvania. Another noted minister of the Lutheran Church was the late Rev. Dr. Reuben Weiser, son of Benjamin Weiser, born in Womelsdorf in 1807, famous in his day as an orator and author of the book, "Regina, the German Captive." He died in Georgetown, Col., Dec. 8, 1885. The Tulpehocken Reformed parsonage sent out at least five preachers to the knowledge of the writer, viz. Rev. William Hendel, D. D., Jr.; Revs. Aaron S., Thomas C. and Samuel A. Leinbach, the sons of Rev. Thomas H. Leinbach, for 38 years the pastor, and Rev. Calvin H. Leinbach, son of Dr. Charles H. Leinbach, pastor for 20 years after his brother's decease.

Of these sons of the Tulpehocken Reformed parsonage, Rev. Thomas C. Leinbach served for many decades a large country charge with his residence at Womelsdorf. Out of this pastor's home came three sons that entered the Reformed ministry, all of whom have given "good proof of their ministry." These are Rev. Paul S. Leinbach, D. D., formerly pastor at Bath, Pa., now the editor of the denominational organ of his church, the Reformed Church Messenger, of Philadelphia. He is widely known also for his extensive world-encircling travels, his erudition and popular lecturing ability. The second son, Rev. Edwin S. Leinbach, resides in Womelsdorf and succeeded his father as pastor of a rural charge lying about Womelsdorf. Rev. Elmer G. Leinbach is the third son of Thomas C. to enter the ministry, now the successful pastor of the Reformed Church at Palmyra.

#### **WALKED FROM BALTIMORE.**

Another old family of Womelsdorf furnished the church with two ministers, a son and a grandson. It was that of John Yost, long known here as "Pappy Yost." When a youth he came from Germany in the same sailing vessel with George Lauer and his family of two sons and three daughters. They landed in Baltimore practically penniless, in 1823, and thence walked to Berks county, whither a sister of Mr. Lauer had preceeded them. They all settled in Womelsdorf, and Mr. Yost, by and by, married one of the daughters of George Lauer, then carrying on the brewing business at Womelsdorf, and whose sons became two of the greatest brewers of Eastern Pennsylvania, Frederick Lauer, of Reading, and George Lauer, of Pottsville, both spending several years of their boyhood life in Womelsdorf. When Mr. Lauer moved with his family to Reading, in 1826, he sold out his business at Womelsdorf to his son-in-law, Mr. Yost. Yost remained here following the business of brew-

ing to the end of his life, and is buried here.

In his well-ordered family were born and grew up several bright and promising boys. William, early turning his attention to religious activities, studied for the ministry and became a long-honored pastor and editor in the Evangelical Association. He himself relates the first impressions and steps to this high calling in a volume of reminiscences which he published towards the evening of his long and honored life. He served his church as pastor, secretary of the missionary society and editor of its church paper for over 60 years, with his home in Cleveland, O., for over 50 years, where he died in May, 1919, aged over 89 years.

He was author of some deeply spiritual, devotional, theological books, a great writer on temperance and one of the leading lights of his church in the day of its greatest growth and spiritual power. One of his daughters, Mrs. Ellen J. Y. Preyer is the editor of the North Carolina White Ribboner, a monthly published in Greensboro, N. C., whose own daughter is married to Judge N. L. Eure.

#### **EVANGELICAL MINISTER.**

Rev. William Yost had an older brother, whose name was Henry Lauer Yost, who married Mary Stoner, with whom he had three children, the eldest one, Henry Rudolph Yost, also becoming a minister of the Evangelical Church, who in due time married Mary L. Spang, daughter of Peter and Rebecca Spang, of Womelsdorf. He was a very successful minister in his denomination, and serving in the itinerancy was pastor of a number of charges between 1871 and 1888, when he died at Womelsdorf. Of his family of six children, the eldest son is Harry P. Yost. He has been an employee of the Reading Eagle since 1889, at present being foreman of the press and stereotype departments, and since 1906 has been a member of the Reading school board.



Other ministers whom the town and community of Womelsdorf gave to the various denominations known to the writer are Rev. Robert Bausch, son of the late Mr. and Mrs. Augustus Bausch, of this town, and brother of the wife of Rev. Edwin S. Leinbach, who is now the Reformed pastor at Sellersville, Bucks county. Rev. Harry D. Althouse, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Irvin D. Althouse, was reared here, and after completing his college and theological training at Lancaster, was ordained as a Reformed minister in 1921 and is now serving the Reformed Church at Berwyn, Pa. He was recently married to a daughter of Charles P. Schaeffer, the cashier of our town bank. They have a bright future before them. Another Reformed minister from our town is Rev. John Keever, of Easton.

Of Lutheran pastors we can name Rev. David L. Fogelman, of Denver, son of the late Mr. and Mrs. Mahlon H. Fogelman, of town, whose efficient helpmeet, Ella Keiser Fogelman, is also one of Womelsdorf's daughters, the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. John G. Keiser, of this town, and sister of the successful barrister of Reading, Harry P. Keiser. Also the Kline brothers, Rev. John J. Kline, Ph. D., D. D., pastor at Pottstown, author and one of the leaders of his conference and synod, and Rev. William H. Kline, Lutheran pastor at Urban. They are the sons of Jacob and Katharine Kline and were reared north of Stouchsburg. Rev. J. Hass-

ler, of the Lutheran Church, of Elmira, N. Y., is another ministerial son of Womelsdorf.

#### LEISS COUSINS.

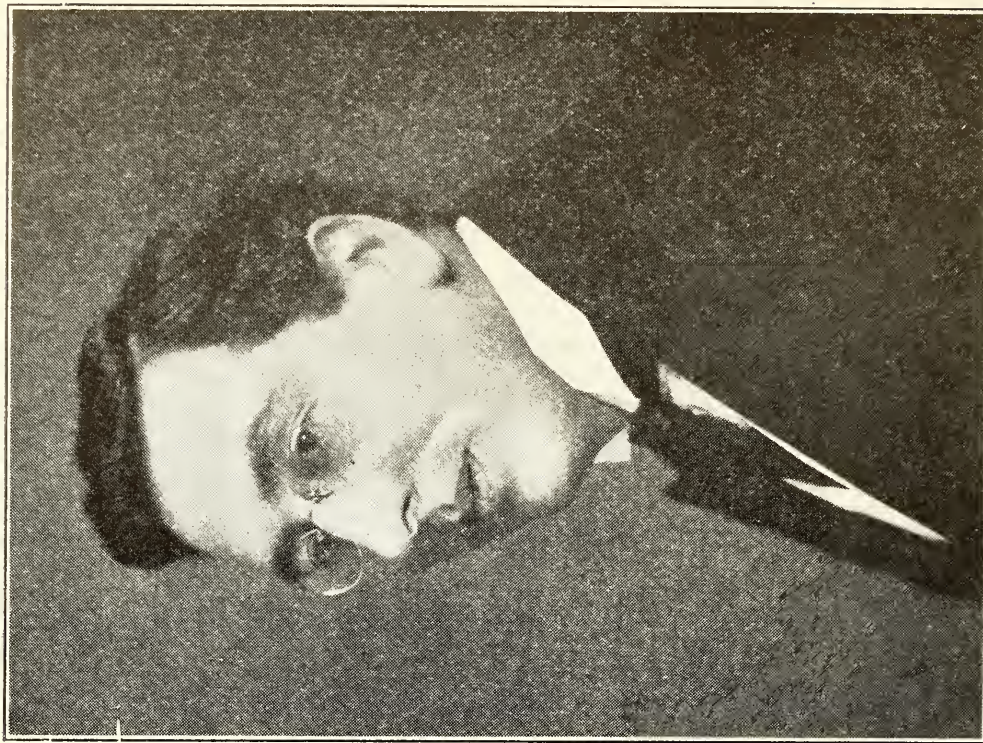
Of other Reformed pastors from this community of the generation preceding the one now on the stage of action, were the Revs. Aaron and Henry Leiss, two cousins, reared in the neighborhood of Host, north of town, who served their church long in the active pastorate, the former's last charge being Orwigsburg, where he died some years ago, the latter still living and serving in the ministry. Another minister was born and reared in this community, on Joseph Leiss' farm, in the person of Rev. Paul D. Yoder, the present Reformed minister at Codorus, York county, Pa. He is a nephew of our townsman, George D. Yoder, residing near Hoffa's Mill.

Last, but not least among the preacher sons of this community is Rev. Paul J. Dundore, a son of Mr. and Mrs. Jonathan E. Dundore, of the neighborhood of the Charming Forge, at present pastor of the Reformed Church in Greenville, while from the same general neighborhood hails also Rev. John Calvin Fisher, Lutheran pastor in North Philadelphia, and Arthur Graeff, a son of Henry, who is now training in the theological seminary at Lancaster. We might also legitimately claim Rev. E. F. Keever, D. D., of Wilmington, N. C., Lutheran pastor, and for one and a half years a chaplain overseas, whose father and ancestors, the Smiths, were born and lived many years in Womelsdorf.





Rev. Thomas C. Leinbach



Who Does Not Know Them—Father and Son  
Rev. Edwin S. Leinbach



## Chapter XIV.

### NOTED SONS AND DAUGHTERS

It will take another chapter to name the noted and successful sons and daughters who have gone out from Womelsdorf and reflected honor upon it. There are many names which Womelsdorf is proud to mention and which she will always be proud to claim as her children. We have given a list of teachers and professional men, especially doctors and ministers. We shall follow this with others in other walks of life who have added glory to the place of their birth and training.

Taking up the legal profession, we have spoken of the Ermentrouts and Livingoods of the past generations; also of the Seltzer Bros., who have all graced the profession of law and jurisprudence and a number of them rose to the highest honors our county can bestow.

Among others in the same profession is Harry P. Keiser. He was born in Womelsdorf, son of John G. and Rebecca M. Keiser, grew up to manhood here, got his earliest mental training here in the public schools and town academy, taught school here at an early age, when the writer remembers him as a buoyant and promising youth. While teaching he looked forward to the law as his profession and did some preliminary reading, and in 1879 registered as a student at law with J. Howard Jacobs, then one of the leading practitioners in the Berks county courts as a criminal lawyer. In Mr. Jacobs' office young Mr. Keiser got excellent training, and upon his admission into practice remained with Mr. Jacobs, a few years later establishing the law firm of Jacobs & Keiser. This relationship

continued until the death of the senior partner in 1902, since which time Mr. Keiser has been practicing alone.

#### **CITY SOLICITOR.**

He served as city solicitor of Reading for three years. Mr. Keiser is still a loyal son of Womelsdorf, where he was born, got his start in life, married his wife, Valeria A. Kintzer, a daughter of Isaac T. Kintzer, long a justice of the peace in Womelsdorf, and for two years, 1895-1897, warden of the Berks county prison; and where all his forebears on both sides of his parentage have lived, died and been buried for a number of generations.

Another lawyer of the Berks county bar is William E. Fisher, a descendant of an old German pioneer, Sebastian Fisher, who settled early in what is now North Heidelberg township, a little to the east of the Klopp Store neighborhood. His ancestors were loyal Americans, having part in the two martial struggles with England. The lawyer's great-grandfather, John Fisher, was a soldier in the War of 1812, and participated in the battle of Baltimore, in August, 1814, in which engagement, one night, Francis Scott Key wrote the immortal song, "The Star-Spangled Banner." Lawyer Fisher's father was a teacher of North Heidelberg for 25 years and justice of the peace of the township for many years. The son prepared and qualified at 16 years of age to follow his father's profession temporarily. Subsequently he was graduated from the Keystone State Normal School, class of 1897. He studied law under the preceptorship of Christian H. Ruhl.

He was admitted to practice in the Berks county courts on Nov. 12, 1900, and later to practice in the Supreme Court of the state. As a side issue he has also been engaged in the building business at Reading and erected many houses. All his kin and early associations lead his mind and memory to this western end of the county as "back home."

#### **ANOTHER WOMELSDORFIAN.**

Still another son of this community following the legal profession in Reading is the present district attorney, H. Robert Mays. He is a full-blooded Womelsdorffian. His parents and ancestors have lived here and nearby, at Schaefferstown, for generations. His brother, Jacob H. Mays, is a resident and successful businessman of Womelsdorf. Mr. Mays, the lawyer, was born here, the son of Henry G. and Susan M. (nee Deppen) Mays. After finishing his studies in the town schools, he attended for a while Albright and Franklin and Marshall Colleges, graduating from the Dickinson Law School at Carlisle in 1902. He read law with the Rothermel Bros., of Reading, the senior member, Hon. John H., filling at one time the office of congressman from this district. He was admitted to practice on Feb. 20, 1904.

Mr. Mays is borough solicitor of this, his native town, and also of the Womelsdorf Union Bank and the present district attorney of Berks county.

Before we turn to other classes of celebrities, we must not fail to mention one in whom this community has a right to feel a just pride, namely Judge George W. Wagner. Although not born here, or of Womelsdorf parentage, he owes his training as a youth to our local Bethany Orphans' Home, into which he was admitted at seven years of age, shortly after the death of both his parents. Here he was trained until he was able to care for himself. He then pursued his further studies at

the Marion Academy of Stouchsburg and the State Normal School at Kutztown, graduating with first honors in the class of 1881. He taught school a few years, but continued his studies and was graduated from Franklin and Marshall College in 1885.

For four years thereafter he taught mathematics at the Kutztown Normal School, but pursued his law studies meanwhile, being registered as a student-at-law with J. H. Marx, of Kutztown. He then entered the law office of Cyrus G. Derr and continued his studies here till admitted to the Berks county bar in November, 1890. He served as district attorney and was admitted to the Superior and Supreme Courts of the state and the District, Circuit and Supreme Court of the United States. Since 1909 he has been a judge of the Court of Common Pleas of this county. He also served for six years as a member of the Reading school board and for a year as its president, while he serves the Bethany Orphans' Home on its board of managers.

Another very successful son of this community is Josiah E. Price, son of John and Mary (Deppen) Price, who was born at Womelsdorf (on the old Deppen farm), Dec. 4, 1843. He was educated in the town schools (Academy), and at Reading. He taught school, worked in art studios of Maurer & Devlin until 1864, when he secured a position with the P. & R. R. Co. in the office of G. A. Nicolls, Esq., then the general superintendent of the company. He advanced rapidly and in 1877 was transferred to the accounting department at Philadelphia, where the general offices were then situated. In 1892 he was appointed auditor of disbursements of the Reading system and has been at the head of this important department until recently, when he was retired on pension. His efficiency was recognized by his selection as a member of the Association of American Railway Ac-



counting Officers, where he rendered conspicuous service, recognized by the U. S. Government in the Interstate Commerce Commission rulings, effective since July 1, 1907.

Mr. Price was married in 1866 to Mary Ann Whitaker and their four children, like their forebears, are well connected. His father was born in Womelsdorf and hails from an old family, which immigrated to America, before the Revolution, from England. His mother comes from Huguenot stock, which settled in Heidelberg township, this county. The American ancestor, Christian Deppen, possessed a gold signet ring with the "fleur de lis" on the seal.

#### KLOPPS, GRUBERS, FISHERS.

If we would but cast our net for "big fish," beginning at the Tulpehocken northwest of town, and make a circumscriptive sweep about the town of Womelsdorf for a few miles' width, we know we would make a big haul. In the neighborhood of Charming Forge and Klopp's Store we would scoop up a monstrous draft of such as are too big to fall through the net's meshes, for thence come the Kloppts, the Grubers, the Fishers, the Reichs and Deppens and Stumps and numerous other families who have added to the good name of this community. The Kloppts as doctors, ministers, druggists, business men and in other walks of life have carried their patronymic to the end of the state and beyond as synonyms of efficiency and honor.

Three Gruber brothers, of whom is first, Michael A., now of Washington, D. C., in governmental employ. He is one of the best specimens of our rural bred Pennsylvania-German stock, with the right family culture, discipline and training, and then with this start to hew his way out of every adverse environment, overcome every difficulty and push ahead until by intelligent perseverance he comes out at last at the top. He credits largely the Womelsdorf Academy and its effi-

cient teacher, Prof. John S. Krumbine, for setting him ablaze with enthusiasm and helping him form the habit of thoroughness and mastery of whatever he undertook. He has furnished the present writer with a fine reminiscent poem in the vernacular of those days and associations of Academy life here, which was published in the Pennsylvania-German Magazine years ago.

After spending five years here he entered an advanced class in Muhlenberg College, from which he was graduated in 1877, with the first honor of his class. Then he followed teaching for 14 years, long as principal of the Bernville High School, where he prepared many young men and women for teaching and courses in higher institution of learning. During 1890-91, 40 of his pupils were teachers in Berks county alone. Since March, 1891, he has filled a clerkship in the War Department at Washington, D. C.

#### CORNER CHURCH HISTORY.

He has done more, perhaps, than any other man in the county to preserve the early local history, transfer of properties, church history and Berks county genealogy. He has recently completed a volume of the history, official records and salient neighborhood events of the (Corner) St. Daniel's Church in Heidelberg township, and presented it to the congregation that is a marvel of painstaking research, of diligent, unwearying labors with the typewriter and of artistic finish to the task. It is a massive volume like a family Bible and no one can reckon its value in dollars and cents.

His brother, John E. Gruber, of Robesonia, is also well versed in local history, has given his brother substantial assistance in his researches, is a genius as a collector of ornithological specimens and a veritable walking encyclopedia on all historical and personal data of the Heidelbergs. Still another brother, Prof. Calvin Luther Gruber, who after the best training in the

home schools, entered the Normal School at Kutztown, from which he was graduated in 1886. He then taught common school for three years, and in 1889 was elected teacher of arithmetic and civil government in his alma mater at Kutztown, and served since 1891 as secretary of the faculty. He is an authority on botany and has made a specialty of trees, shrubs and woody vines, of which he has made large collections and has published many articles and brochures on them in educational journals. He is also well versed in birds and insects. This trio of brothers reflects credit on their parental training and influence, the grit of our best Pennsylvania-German stock, of which they are good specimens, and of the quality of mental timber grown in western Berks.

#### **WENRICHS, BEAVERS. RUTHS.**

By sweeping our net southward to and across the William Penn Highway we come into the neighborhood of the old homes of the Wenrichs, Beavers, Ruths and other good family stock. The Wenrichs are an old Heidelberg family and doubtless many of this line of good pioneer stock have made their mark in the world. We shall take up but one member of the family, who is still with us at 80 years, active and alert. We refer to Dr. Reuben D. Wenrich, the founder and proprietor of Grand View Sanitarium of Wernersville.

He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Adam Wenrich and was born in Lower Heidelberg township, May 15, 1842. His township schooling was supplemented by courses at Womelsdorf, Stouchsburg, Pughtown, Trappe and Millersville. Afterwards he was graduated from Duff's Commercial College in Philadelphia, and after reading medicine with Dr. William J. Schoener, of Strausstown, from the University of Pennsylvania in 1864. From 1858 to 1862 he taught school. After practicing medicine in and about Wernersville for about 10 years, he

formed a partnership with Dr. James W. Deppen, an experienced physician, also of Wernersville.

#### **GRAND VIEW'S FOUNDERS.**

In 1879 they bought the Mountain Home, a health institution, which had gained some renown as a "water-cure" resort, changed the name to Grand View Sanitarium and built up the place, step by step, till 1895, when Dr. Deppen died, and Dr. Wenrich became the sole owner of the institution. During the past 25 years this mountain resort has gone forward with marvelous strides. Dr. Wenrich is aided by his two sons, George G. and John A., also doctors and graduates of the University of Pennsylvania and State College, respectively. Grand View is one of the best equipped, best managed, best served, most grandly located and most widely known and patronized health and rest institutions of our land. Farms and woodland to the amount of 600 acres are in possession and used to contribute to the comfort, service and enjoyment of the guests. Commodious buildings, all modernly equipped, fine flower and fruit gardens, all the most modern electrical and mechanical inventions, with the best of water in abundance and scenery ranking with the grandest of America, all minister to the fortunate guests, who here come for rest, recreation or revitalization. One would have to go far to find a hotel where better meals are served. For years Dr. Wenrich and his sons and their families have given their skill, knowledge and labors for the benefit of the guests and patrons in greater comforts and conveniences and in more beautiful, attractive surroundings. It is the marvelous, almost life-long creation of a genius who has ability of head and heart and hand, and has helped to give Wernersville a country-wide fame as a health resort.

Another eminent doctor from these parts was the late Dr. Daniel B. Beaver, a noted specialist, of Read-



ing; Dr. Paul D. Reich, of Jones-town, also hails from this section.

### OLD FAMILIES.

Coming a little closer to town we have the Leiss family, the Laucks (Laux) household, and other old families, all descending from ancestral stock leading back for 175 years. But all of them are still bearing good fruit and scions of the Leisses (the son of George, a lawyer and business man) are making good in Reading, and of the Laucks, a son, Jacob, retired in our own town, and another manufacturer and business man of York, while the children of a daughter, Mrs. Mahlon Fogelman (nee Laucks), besides the clergyman of Denver already mentioned, are all nobly active.

Mr. and Mrs. Mahlon Fogelman (she was Miss Elizabeth Laucks) lived together for 58 years and reared a family of nine (seven boys and two girls), who are making noble records for themselves. They are Dr. A. P. Fogelman, head surgeon of the Homestead Carnegie Steel Works; Rev. D. L. Fogelman, Lutheran pastor at Denver, Pa.; William B. Fogelman, who at the time of his death, aged 52, was secretary and treasurer of the M. C. Ebbecke Hardware Co., of Allentown, Pa.; Robert L. Fogelman, who at death, aged 52, was general superintendent of the American Car and Foundry Co., of Terre Haute, Ind.; Vicus J. M. Fogelman, who when he died, aged 39, was in the jewelry business at Pittsburgh, Pa.; Oscar L. Fogelman, who is in the automobile business at Allentown, Pa.; Rev. Harry L. Fogelman, formerly pastor of Christ Reformed Church of Allentown, Pa., is now Chautauqua and Lyceum lecturer and instructor of Ford salesmen in Chicago. The daughters, Eva and Lillian, both live at York, Pa. Of course, parents and a town can be proud of such a family.

Womelsdorf itself has sent out others, sons and daughters, who

have risen into prominence and success. The accomplished wife of Prof. A. C. Rothermel, principal of the Keystone State Normal School, was born and reared in Womelsdorf, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John A. Spatz. Her sister is the wife of H. J. Schad, and another Womelsdorf girl, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. S. Pierce Mowrey, now Mrs. Beulah Carr Nevin, the partner of Mr. Schad in a chain of Reading theatres. Grandfather Samuel Mowry was the inventor of the horse hay-rake.

William H. Bennethum, for many years manager of the Harrisburg store of Dives, Pomeroy & Stewart, who died at Harrisburg last September, was a native of Womelsdorf. So is Rudolph J. Calm, one of the departmental superintendents of this firm's store in Reading, an honored son of Womelsdorf, whose name is well known all over the county as an efficient and popular Sunday school worker. The late Dr. Peter K. Filbert, who was a leading dentist of Pottsville, was born and bred in Womelsdorf. So was Dr. Samuel Marshall, of Ashland, for 40 years a noted physician of that town.

### LOCATED IN OHIO.

To count all our boys, born and bred in town, and then gone abroad to achieve success, we must not forget the name Adam J. Rauck, who rose to the front rank in Akron, O., in the cigar business, and was also head of a band of musicians. Then there is George Weidman, son of the late Joel Weidman, who learned telegraphy of George Miller, the town operator of 40 years ago, and then went to the southwest and is superintendent of telegraphy on railroad lines. So is Calvin Leightner, holding a similar position in railroad telegraphy in Missouri. Elias Arnold has for many years been station agent at Lickdale, while Silas Tolbert, an orphan boy, was raised here by his grandparents and has achieved success in Canton, O. Thomas Moore built up a large to-

bacco business at Fifth and Penn, Reading, while George Leiss established a large dry goods store at Eighth and Penn. Dr. Charles S. Phillips and Dr. Walker Phillips, his brother, pharmacists, also hailed from this locality.

Edward E. Croll, connected with the editorial department of the Public Ledger, of Philadelphia, was born here, and so was Paul Landis, a teacher at Illinois University. Dr. Miriam Warner, of Philadelphia, is the daughter of Rebecca Filbert, herself the daughter of the late George Filbert, of town. The two sons of Mr. and Mrs. John Schonour, graduates of Mercersburg Seminary and the William Penn School for Boys, of Philadelphia, are both successful. The elder, a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, entered the coal business in Philadelphia; the younger, after graduating from Cornell University, became the manager of a large ranch in Terra Ceia, N. C. LeRoy F. Christman, son of the postmaster at Womelsdorf, a first honor graduate of our local high school, and of high rank as a graduate later in Lehigh University, is one of the three engineers employed by the county of Berks and at present engaged on work preliminary to the erection of the Schuylkill avenue bridge at Reading. Quite a number of our young folk are now away at schools, as Miss Ella Moore, at Wilson, and Miss Margaret Mays, at Smith's Colleges. Also Miss Sarah Knoll, a student in Neff's School of Oratory, in Philadelphia; Miss Dorothy Schoener, a student of Hood College, Md.; Miss Mary I. Althouse, Miss Emma Wilhelm and Thomas Fidler, students at the K. S. N. S., Kutztown, Pa.; Earl Bennethum, a student at Franklin and Marshall College, at Lancaster, Pa.

Other promising sons and daughters of town are Miss Meta Schelley, secretary for the S. S. White Manufacturing Co.; George J. Moyer, a teacher of Rochester, N. Y.; Miss

Laura Moyer, a dentist of Allentown; Miss Ada Moyer, a nurse in Philadelphia; Henry Hackman, principal of the Stouchsburg public schools; Miss Pauline Hackman, a second-grade teacher at Reading, Pa.; Miss Ella Moyer, a druggist at Tremont, Pa.; Stewart Williamson, a graduate of Lehigh University, now mining engineer at Reedsville, W. Va.; Miss Mary Beckey, a trained nurse, now residing in Womelsdorf; Miss Mary Weise, employed by the O. H. Bennett Co., of Reading; Joseph Grimes, at present taking an electrical engineering course at the Keystone Institute, at Reading; Miss Helen Shenck, bookkeeper for the Womelsdorf Motor Co.; Miss Elsie Wartluft, a teacher at Boyertown, Pa.; Miss Mary E. Althouse, a nurse at Bryn Mawr Hospital; Ralph Knoll, an agricultural student at State College of Pennsylvania; Miss Bessie Fromm and Miss Beulah Himmelreich and John Klopp, taking business courses at the Keystone Institute, of Reading, Pa.

The three sons of Dr. Brossman are successful, and ever so many sons and daughters have remained right in town in the past and present who have been or are now our leaders in business and industry, professional men and home makers too numerous to name without fear of prominent omissions.

And yet we cannot overlook the names of our public school faculty, so nobly headed by Miss Mary E. Moore, the principal, assisted by Misses Annie Eberly, Charlotte Hackman, Pauline Illig, Annie Kintzer, who are natives, and J. Harold Klopp, Laura M. Snyder, Mabel A. Knoll and Clara Bordner, who come from the surrounding nearby community.

#### **MOTHERS AND TEACHERS.**

From all this it would seem a good and safe rule for one seeking fame and success in life was to order his birth and training in or about Womelsdorf. All honor to the mothers and teachers of this locality



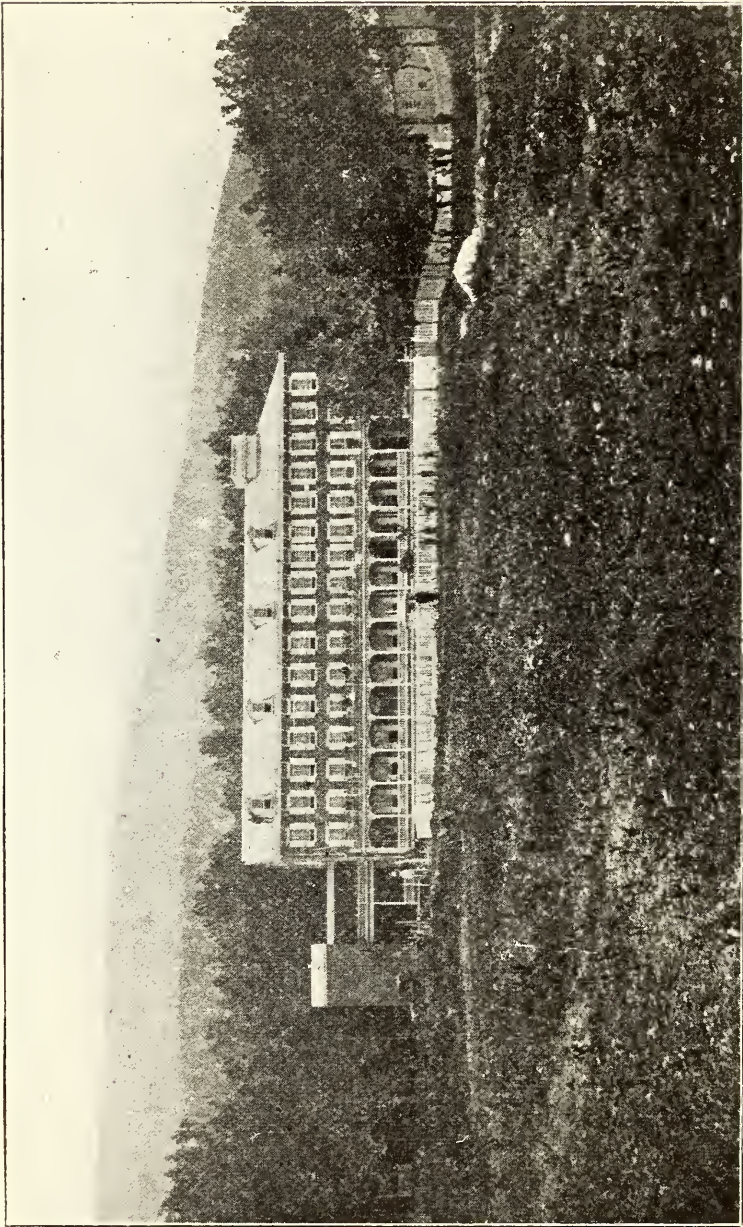
of the past and present, too often overlooked in our reckoning.

If one sweeps west of town, we find many who have gone to Reading from this section and have plucked pronounced success from this seething municipality of earnest rivalry and endeavor. Thus John D. Mishler, philanthropist, philosopher and long theatrical manager, the "Uncle John" of Reading, was born and reared near Newmanstown. So was W. W. Stewart, the tobacconist, born in Newmanstown. The Yocum Bros. hail from Stouchsburg. The Illigs of the Penn street store were from the Mill Creek Valley, and both the superintendent of the Reading Eagle Co., John W. Rauch, and its managing editor, Albert N. Burkholder, hail from these parts, the former born in Heidelberg, near Womelsdorf, and the latter in Stricklerstown. Surely this old Womelsdorf community has given to Reading some good blood since the days of Conrad Weiser, one of its founders and first justices, and Peter Filbert, the first mayor. We have given it its Muhlenbergs, Livingoods, Ermentrouts, Lauers, Yosts, Geisslers, its Filberts (a second mayor recently), Stephens, Eckerts, Phillips, Beavers, Illigs, Mishlers, Stewarts, Mays, Keisers, Prices, Mrs. Rauch (nee Anderson), Mrs. Carr

(Mowry), Mrs. Schad (Spatz) and many others. What a home-coming some day, when all these children of Womelsdorf decide to go "back home."

#### **MUCH COUNTRY BLOOD.**

Reading, like every large city, has ever been getting much of its best blood from the country. It is the history, thus far, of all our younger and smaller cities and towns. A city's sources of purest water and best blood is rural. Wonder what would happen if Reading, for instance, were turned inside-out, like a flour sack, and dusted of all its rural-bred population for only two generations! Could its schools and churches and stores and business enterprises and manufactories and street cars be run at all? Many law offices would be vacant and who would sit on the judges' bench? How few doctors would be left! And many a pulpit would be vacant. Our stores would suffer for heads of the departments and many clerks would be missed from the counters. Print shops and newspaper offices, dental parlors and drug stores, hotels and business places would look woefully deserted! And would these now city dwellers all go back to their ancestral homes, how many of them would trek back to Womelsdorf and the Tulpehocken region!



**The Manderbach Springs Hotel**



## Chapter XV.

## EMINENT VISITORS

As a matter of record it is always interesting to know what distinguished visitors have come to any community, and what was the occasion that brought them there. As far as this is possible, we shall in this chapter do this for Womelsdorf and this community of the Tulpehocken.

Inasmuch as a community church was erected as early as 1727 and the original settlement quite a large one, constantly augmented by new accessions and these a sincerely religious people among whom the church life figured prominently, it might be expected that the first men of prominence who were induced to visit this Tulpehocken community would be religious leaders from older settlements. Hence we find that during the very earliest years the Lutheran pastor, of Schoharie, N. Y., Rev. John Bernhart von Duehren, visited the colony once or twice to minister to them by preaching the Gospel, and to administer the holy sacraments. Later Rev. Gerhard Henckel, pastor of Falckner's Swamp and other Lutheran churches, came for the same purpose. They held services in some one's house (likely Casper, or Loenhardt Rieth's, or Heinrich Zeller's), up to this time; but Rev. Henckel induced them to "rise and build" a church, which they did in 1727, together with a school house.

## MORAVIAN MISSIONARIES.

Being, however, without a pastor and very desirous of regular services, they were ready to accept almost any makeshift now to have God's word expounded unto them and be led in the worship of His Holy Name. For a time vagrant self-styled preachers supplied this want; for a period the school teacher read some one's printed sermon for the festal Sunday. But soon the earliest Moravian missionaries—sent forth from Herrnhut, Germany,

for the conversion of the North American Indians, came this way, en route to Shamokin (present Sunbury), whither a road had been opened up from the east by way of the Tulpehocken settlement, and where an Indian tribe maintained an encampment under the well-known Chief of Shekallamy. Finding these fellow German countrymen hospitable and hungry for the gospel, the Moravian missionaries remained over and preached for them, incidentally making a few converts to their faith from among these early settlers.

After Conrad Weiser's arrival, his knowledge of the Indian tongue and his willing heart to lend assistance to so worthy a missionary enterprise, these missionaries found in him a willing co-laborer and his home a frequent meeting and stopping place for these early Moravian heralds of the cross. Thus, gradually they also gained a foothold in the Lutheran congregational life at Rieth's Church by inducing them to accept their ministers and teachers as supplies. This arrangement brought hither not only such pastors as the Moravians sent them, as Revs. Buettner, Maurer and Leitbecker, the last of whom had been a parochial teacher for a while, but it induced also the Moravian bishops, Cammerhof, Spangenberg, Kohler, and perhaps Zeisberger, and finally Count Ludwig von Zinzendorf, their greatest leader and the founder of the American branch of the Moravian Church, to visit here.

By about 1731, or 1732, Rev. John Casper Stoever, then of Conestoga, and the greatest Lutheran Church organizer and home missionary of that period in Pennsylvania, came upon the scene, declared the Moravians non-Lutheran and interlopers and, associating with him a faction of the congregation, sought to oust the Moravian pastors out of their assumed pastoral office and rights. This led to bitter factions and a notorious "controversy," which continued for over a decade and brought to the scene other church leaders and officers of the law and endless conferences and hostilities.

**PENNS' SURVEYORS.**

Previous to these church and legal gatherings the surveyors of William Penn, the proprietor, were in these parts, evidently to survey the local manors, already described in Chapter III, to fix the lines of these manors devised to his children and also, in 1727, to survey the new Tulpehocken road then laid out "between the Lutheran meeting house on the Tulpehocken and George Boone's meeting house in Oley." Who these surveyors were is not certainly known by the writer, but it is probable that Nicholas Scull, who was the Penns' surveyor-general a little later, when the town of Reading was laid out, and previous surveys made thereabouts, was already in this employ when the proprietor's will was being carried out with reference to these manor tracts and patents. So we credit the presence along the Tulpehocken of the Penn surveyors about this early period.

Among the Reformed church leaders we know that Revs. John Philip Boehm, George Michael Weiss and J. Peter Miller were the first missionaries on the scene. The visits of Conrad Beissel, founder of the Cocalico or Ephrata Cloister Church of Seventh Day Baptists in 1735, and afterwards to propagate his doctrines and make converts or proselytes, adds another noted church leader to the list of eminent visitors of this section in that early period.

**REV. MUHLENBERG'S VISITS.**

But the churchman, who wielded the widest and longest influence in this community, and one of the greatest church organizers of America, paid his first visit here in 1743. He was Rev. Henry Melchoir Muhlenberg, a recent graduate of the Halle Orphans' Institution, or University, of Germany—the school of Spener and Francke. He had but recently arrived in Philadelphia at the earnest solicitation of the combined churches of Philadelphia, Trappe, Goschenhoppen and Falckner's Swamp. He came for their spiritual and pastoral supervision. He had taken up his abode at Trappe and named it New Providence, and was now come to settle the troublesome church quarrel on the Tulpehocken. He was the guest of Conrad Weiser and with his enlightenment went into the whole protracted trouble to the very root and bottom of it and doubtless with his advice, or consent, the new (Christ) Tulpe-

hocken Lutheran Church, was started upon a solidly Lutheran basis, placing at its head Rev. Tobias Wagner, himself of noble descent, as first pastor. Muhlenberg came again in the course of this development and in consequence the Moravian adherents withdrew from the Rieth's Church and founded a church of their own in North Heidelberg.

In April, 1745, young Muhlenberg came again, but on a different mission. He came to lead Conrad Weiser's eldest daughter, Anna Maria, to the nuptial altar as his bride. He had brought with him two recently arrived pastors, also from Halle, Revs. J. H. Schaum and Peter Brunnholtz, as witnesses, or groomsmen. The couple went to Christ Lutheran Church, or parsonage, newly constructed, where the pastor, Rev. Tobias Wagner, united them in holy marriage on April 22, 1745, the record of it in the church book to this day bearing witness in Rev. Wagner's bold hand in the following language, under the head of marriages:

"Der wolehrwuerdige H. Heinrich Melchior Muhlenberg, best-verdien-ter Lutherischer prediger, des mit Jungfrau Anna Maria Weiserin, des hoch-edlen Hr. Justus Conrad Weiser's allhier off. ledigen tochter proclamirt und copulirt, Freitags nach Ostern."

Translated this reads:

"The Rt. Rev. Mr. Henry Melchior Muhlenberg, most worthy Lutheran preacher, was here united in marriage on Friday after Easter, with Miss Anna Maria Weiser, the publicly proclaimed single daughter of the most honorable Mr. Justice Conrad Weiser."

**PRAYED FOR PIOUS WIFE.**

In his account of this event, sent to Halle, Muhlenberg declares that he had always intended to remain unmarried, but numerous officious matchmakers in the city and country kept annoying him, and the devil, by means of false and infamous rumors, began to worry him, so that "he prayed the Lord to give him a pious wife. The Lord regarded his prayers and granted him a young woman who was 'pure in heart, pious, unpretentious, meek and active.'" (Halle Reports, p. 117).

We are glad for this description of one of Womelsdorf's early belles, the chaste and modest Christian daughter of one of its leading families of that day, destined to become "the first lady in the land" in the



Lutheran church and the ancestress of one of America's noblest and most famous families.

Muhlenberg alludes to this union again in his Halle, or diary, reports in this wise (translation): "In the year 1743 our friend, Conrad Weiser, became acquainted with the first German Evangelical preacher, sent hither, fell in love with him and his doctrine, and in 1745, gave him his eldest daughter as bride. This close relationship caused occasional visits and a permanent correspondence. Both were employed, as far as God granted grace, to the edification of the soul in which he seemed for various years to appear rather sound and alive in the faith. The Holy Bible was to him a thoroughly familiar book."

### IN MANY PULPITS.

From this it appears that this apostle of American Lutheranism visited here occasionally in all the years to follow till his own death in 1787. Were one to follow this patriarch's itinerary, the correct dates of these visits could be secured. Generally they were in connection with preaching itineraries, or synodical gatherings, in these parts, for Muhlenberg is known to have preached in most of the old churches hereabouts — St. Daniels, the two Tulpehocken, Millbach, Schaefferstown, Brickerville and other old Lancaster county churches.

One particular and important visit of Muhlenberg and other church dignitaries, is on record, and must not be omitted. In March, 1751, Pastor Muhlenberg received a call from the New York Lutherans to become their shepherd. It was a hard question for him to decide alone. Other weighty church matters lay on his heart. So he summoned a number of his fellow pastors of Pennsylvania to meet him at his father-in-law's house for a conference on the situation. They met him here on March 21, 1751. Rev. Brunnholtz, pastor of the Philadelphia and Germantown Lutheran congregations; Rev. J. C. Hartwick, later of Hartwick Theological Seminary fame of New York state, Rev. Handschuh, of Lancaster, and others of his clerical brethren met at Reading a few days previous, where it seems Conrad Weiser was then living. But on the 22d they all went together to the Heidelberg homestead, and then decided to climb the mountainside to

its very top at Eagles' Peak and from its summit "view the landscape o'er." Dr. Mann, in his "Life and Times of Muhlenberg," alluded to this event from data taken from Muhlenberg's own diary, and says:

### SANG OLD HYMNS.

"The sun was shining, sky clear and the large rocks protected them from the biting March winds. Three eagles were circling about the summit, which led their hearts and memories back to Halle, their Alma Mater, where a symbolic eagle couched in front of the wide-spreading rays of the sun on the orphan institution. Bible quotations were given by the party, as suggested by this scene, and some old German church hymns were intoned and praises to God carried from this lofty height to His heavenly throne."

So here, at Womelsdorf, were great leaders of the Lutheran Church engaged in the planting of this church of Luther and the Reformation upon the American continent, settling the future home and sphere of influence of its destined patriarch and healing the bitter waters of the church at Lancaster at the time.

Other great meetings at Weiser's are known and recorded: Shekallamy, the chief, or agent of the great federation of eastern Indian tribes, known as the Five, later Six Nations, and residing at Shamokin (now Sunbury), came here as early as 1731 and induced Conrad Weiser to accompany him to Philadelphia. It was doubtless he who introduced Weiser to Gov. Gordon, who learned to appreciate the latter's worth as an interpreter and thus opened Weiser's official career as colonial interpreter for the governors of half a dozen colonies during the period of the Indian treaties and settlements.

### VISITS BY INDIAN CHIEFS.

Shekallamy and other Indian chiefs came frequently to Weiser's home in the years to come. In 1732 the six nations agreed to have Shekallamy and Conrad Weiser as their mediators and interpreters, and for decades Weiser was almost constantly employed by them and the colonial governments. Frequent conferences were held at his home by representatives of both the Indian tribes and the colonies. Weiser became an official and historical character and his home as historical a meeting place as some royal courts.

In September, 1736, the chiefs of the six nations, by previous arrangement, gathered here at Weiser's

home. He was to appear with them at President Logan's house, Stenton, Philadelphia, to ratify the treaty made with them in 1732. There, on the 28th, in the presence of Gov. Thomas Penn, the same was effected. (See Colonial Records).

In the year 1738 Bishop Spangenberg, David Zeisberger and Shebosh, Moravian missionaries to the Indians, meet here to engage Weiser to accompany them to Onandago, N. Y., (a sort of capital for these six tribes, the Mohawks, Onandagoes, Senekas, Oneidas, Tuscaroras and the Cayugas), a distance of 500 miles through pathless forests, which he did, enduring great hardships. In 1741 he here instructed three of their missionaries, Pyrlaeus, Buettner and Zander, in the Indian language for three months.

#### **ZINZENDORF'S REQUEST.**

In 1742 Count Zinzendorf is at his house to induce Weiser to accompany him to Bethlehem to interpret his sermons there to the Indians to whom he preached. He spent the month of August doing this, greatly drawn to this spiritual teacher, according to his own words. On Jan. 30, 1743, Thomas McKee, Gov. Thomas' messenger, spent the night at Weiser's and accompanied him next day on a trip to Shamokin, on an errand for the government.

On June 18, 1743, another official (name not given in narrative), came from Philadelphia with instructions from our provincial government in behalf of Virginia, to carry terms of a treaty for some disputed lands in that province with the Six Nations to Onandago. (Journal of this trip in Colonial Records).

Many more important personages than here given must have been at Weiser's home during these decades of Indian negotiations between at least half a dozen colonies and the eastern Indian tribes, which kept him almost constantly employed as agent and interpreter in travel and council meetings. But the outbreak of the French and Indian War in the fifties brought more characters of note to this community. Thus, in June, 1754, Weiser accompanied Benjamin Franklin to Albany, N. Y. Did they meet here?

#### **GOVERNOR A VISITOR.**

In January, 1756, Gov. Robert H. Morris and James Logan were here on their way to a conference at Carlisle by way of Harris Ferry. Weiser accompanied them. Doubtless many other military companies and

leaders passed through here between 1755 and 1763.

Whom the funeral of Conrad Weiser attracted to this community in 1760 we cannot certainly tell. Doubtless Muhlenberg and his wife and children were here. Rev. John Nicholas Kurtz preached his funeral sermon and doubtless some acquaintances and officials of the village of Reading attended as well as other old associates from this settlement.

The interests that would bring noted strangers to this community for the period between the two wars of the colonists were the church-life, the Charming Forge industry, the laying out and building boom of the town of Womelsdorf, together with the renewed foreign immigration movement and the settlement of the ever westward receding frontier of Pennsylvania. Unfortunately we have few records left to tell us of these local events. The ledgers of the Charming Forge (preserved in the Pennsylvania Historical Society library of Philadelphia), contain accounts of the trading at this place. The "Documentary History of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania" and the published "Minutes and Letters of the Coetus (Reformed Church) of Pennsylvania" are very interesting, as they give us glimpses of the life and personnel of the churches in this community. There we find who the pastors were and lay delegates that attended these annual ecclesiastical conventions and what were the questions discussed.

#### **MINISTERIUM MEETING.**

Thus we notice that on Oct. 4 and 5, 1779, the 32d convention of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania was held in Christ (Tulpehocken) Lutheran Church. The following ministers were present: Revs. Kurtz, sr., president; Kurtz, jr., Schulze, Voight, Frederick August and Henry Ernest Muhlenberg, Lehman, Schroeter, Goehring and Melsheimer, nearly all of whom would have to pass through Womelsdorf. In like manner these synodical conventions for the years 1788 (held at Reading), 1789 (at Lebanon), 1794 (again at Reading), 1798 (at Lebanon), 1802 (at Reading), 1808 (at Lebanon), 1813 (at Reading), etc., would have caused many of these veteran preachers and their delegates to pass through our town. Likewise the "Minutes of Coetus" show visits and conferences of many of the early Reformed pastors in this community before Womelsdorf had its own church (1793).



It should be mentioned also that the pastors who ministered to the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians who had settled beyond this German settlement towards the Susquehanna, and built their earliest churches before 1740 at Hanover, Lebanon county, Derry and Paxtang, Dauphin county, very likely reached them—as they came from New England, New Jer-

sey and Philadelphia—by passing up through this valley of the Tulpehocken. If so, we may claim the credit of having had such distinguished men as Revs. David Brainerd (afterwards the great and famous Indian missionary); Charles Beatty, the Tennents and William Bertram pass through our streets.



**The Hills Which John Penn Saw—Then Without Buildings**



## Chapter XVI.

### EMINENT VISITORS

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Beginning now with the Revolutionary War period and continuing our account of the visits to these parts by eminent strangers we have already seen in former chapters what local leaders of that conflict for independence were brought to our community. It remains to be told that many illustrious personages must have passed through this valley, and hence through Womelsdorf, during this war. The occasions were the passing of war prisoners into and through these parts, the nursing of our own wounded soldiers in large numbers at Bethlehem and Ephrata (some even at Reading), and the seat of our Continental Congress being established in York during the fall, winter and spring of 1777-1778, which brought the eastern delegates and business messengers to and from the east, along the route of this valley.

We know that Congress fled from Philadelphia to Lancaster on Sept. 25 and 26, 1777, but not directly, but by way of Bethlehem and "the Easton road" to Reading. As Reading had an old post-road by way of Womelsdorf and Schaefferstown to Lancaster, it is quite probable that this was the course they pursued. There were no newspapers then published to consult, and the published diary of one of the leaders in Congress at that time, John Adams, of Massachusetts, afterward second president of the U. S. is silent about the route beyond Reading. In a letter to his wife, Abigail, written from "a German hotel about 18 miles from Reading" (Levan's at Kutztown, now Kemps), he gives a minute description of the unique

and quaint-mannered entertainment at the German inn at Trexler's (Trexlertown), with its scrupulous cleanliness and good cooking of the painstaking little Pennsylvania-German landlady. Well, if they passed up this way for Lancaster from Reading then my readers have but to look at the personnel of that illustrious Congress to know what a distinguished party of visitors or travelers, our town has to its credit.

#### MEMBERS OF CONGRESS.

The following persons composed the Congress that sat in York, and as they fled along the route indicated, not only did the eastern representatives pass this route, but all members who were present at the time in Philadelphia withdrew at the approach of Gen. Howe's army to Philadelphia after the disastrous defeat of the Continental army at the battle of Brandywine on Sept. 11, 1777.

Congress at York, Pa., Sept. 30, 1777, to June 27, 1778.

New Hampshire—Nathaniel Folsom, George Frost, John Wentworth and Dr. Josiah Bartlett.

Massachusetts — Samuel Adams, Elbridge Gerry, James Lovell, John Adams, Francis Dana, John Hancock and Dr. Samuel Holten.

Connecticut — William Williams, Elipholet Dyer, Richard Law, Titus Homer, Roger Sherman, Samuel Huntingdon and Dr. Oliver Wolcott.

Rhode Island—Henry Marchant, William Ellery and John Collins.

New York—James Duane, William Dyer, Francis Lewis, Gouverneur Morris and Philip Livingston.

New Jersey—John Witherspoon, Dr. Jonathan Elner, Abraham Clark and Dr. Nathaniel Scudder.

Pennsylvania — Robert Morris, Daniel Roberdeau, James Smith, Jonathan Bayard Smith, William Clingan and Joseph Reed.

Delaware—Thomas McKean.

Maryland—Charles Carroll, Samuel Chase, Benjamin Rumsey, George Plater, William Smith, James Forbes and John Henry, jr.

Virginia—Francis Lightfoot Lee, Richard Henry Lee, John Harvie, Benjamin Harrison, Dr. Joseph Jones, Thomas Adams and John Banister.

North Carolina—John Penn, Cornelius Harnett and Dr. Thomas Berte.

South Carolina — Henry Laurens, Thomas Heyward, jr., Arthur Middleton, John Matthews, Richard Hutson and William Henry Drayton.

Georgia — Edward Longworthy, John Walton, Dr. Nathan Brownson and Joseph Wood.

#### JOHN ADAMS' LETTERS.

These 64 delegates, 26 of whom had been signers of the Declaration of Independence, either passed through Womelsdorf enroute to Lancaster, thence to York, or they went from Reading direct, via Ephrata and Lititz and so passed just south of the ridge of hills that separates this town from the direct Lancaster route. They were all in Reading and crossed the Schuylkill about Sept. 23, 1777, according to published correspondence of John Adams to his wife. He describes the alarm at Philadelphia on Sept. 19 caused by Gen. Howe's approach. Important papers of the treasury and war offices were at once shipped to Bristol and Congress followed in piece meal flight via Trenton (21st), Easton (22d), Bethlehem (23d), and Reading (24th or 25th).

Mr. Adams says: "In order to convey the papers with safety, which is of more importance than all the

members, we were induced to take this circuit, which is near 180 miles, whereas, this town (York) by the direct road is not more than 88 miles from Philadelphia. This tour has given me an opportunity of seeing many parts of this country which I never saw before." Well, he saw some of God's country surely whichever route he took from Reading.

#### ELLERY'S DIARY.

From published letters by William Ellery we learn that he did not get to York till some time in November, when he was accompanied by his son-in-law, Francis Dana, also a member of this Congress. They met on their way both Samuel and John Adams and also at another place the president of Congress (now known as speaker), John Hancock, who resigned his position (later filled by Henry Laurens) on account of illness and was returning home in a sulky, accompanied by a large escort of servants.

We quote from Mr. Ellery's diary:

"Nov. 13, 1777. Met Samuel and John Adams about nine miles from Levan's (Kutztown) and hard by a tavern. They turned back to the inn (Trexlerstown), where we celebrated and ate bread and butter together. They were to my great sorrow bound home. I could not but lament that Congress would be without their councils and myself without their conversation."

Samuel Adams had for the first time received leave of absence from Congress, while John Adams had been appointed commissioner to France, and they journeyed home together. The sessions of Congress at York lasted from Sept. 30, 1777, to June 27, 1778, for nine months.

Mr. Ellery's itinerary from the Schuylkill to York led by way of Ephrata and Lititz, according to his diary, and it is more than likely that others chose this same route. Whether it included Womelsdorf is not known to the writer.



**MESSAGE OF VICTORY.**

On Oct. 30, 1777, Col. James Wilkinson rode through these parts from Reading to York, to carry the news of Burgoyne's surrender to Congress. He left Saratoga, N. Y., immediately after the battles and after the British commander, Gen. Burgoyne, was forced to surrender his army and hand his sword to Gen. Gates, as the chosen messenger to carry the good news to Congress. His route of travel lay down the Hudson Valley of New York, across New Jersey to Easton and thence by "the Easton road" to Reading. But here he, for some reason, remained for a few days, and it was not till the end of the month that Congress was officially informed of the great victory. The message was surely an important one and this western end of the county prides itself that it lay along the route of this important message-bearer. As he went directly to York, without the necessity of going to Lancaster as Congress had to do, to meet at which place, Sept. 27, they adjourned in Philadelphia, he very likely passed up this valley to Harris Ferry and thence to York.

When he arrived at York Congress gave him leave to proclaim his glad tidings in person upon the floor of the entire Congress. This is what he announced: "The whole British army have laid down their arms at Saratoga. Our own, full of vigor and courage, expect your orders; it is for your wisdom to decide where the country may still have need of their services."

Congress adjourned for the day, (Nov. 1) in honor of this victory and York had a holiday. Before it adjourned however, it passed a resolution recommending to the executive powers to set apart Dec. 18 for solemn thanksgiving and praise. This was the first national thanksgiving proclamation since the formation of the federal government.

On Nov. 4 the thanks of Congress were presented to Maj. Gen. Gates, his officers and troops, and a medal

of gold ordered to be struck in commemoration of the great victory. Gen. Gates became the hero of the hour, and himself came to York, and doubtless over the same route passing possibly through Womelsdorf or close by. He arrived in York on the afternoon of Jan. 19, 1778, so his passage through these parts was possibly on the preceding day. He was made the president of the board of war, which now sat at York the same as Congress.

**LAFAYETTE'S TRIP.**

Gen. Lafayette also came to York, after he had recovered from wounds received in the battle of the Brandywine, which were nursed by the Moravian nurses at Bethlehem. He must evidently have traveled over this same route from Bethlehem to York. And so did Gen. Baron Steuben, that veteran commander and former aid-de-camp to Frederick the Great in the Seven Years' War. After landing at Portsmouth, N. H., he went to York to offer his services to Congress. He arrived with his suite on Feb. 5, 1778, and remained until Feb. 19, and at the solicitation of Washington, he was appointed inspector general of the army and was sent to Valley Forge, where he met Washington and rendered such signal services in drilling our troops. Coming directly from New England, and, the way of travel by Philadelphia being cut off by Gen. Howe's occupation, Baron Steuben must have come via Easton, Bethlehem and Reading, thence to York. We should be glad to know for certain that the route taken was through Womelsdorf to Harris Ferry, thence to York, rather than through Lancaster county, via Adamstown, Ephrata, Lititz to Columbia, or Marietta on the Susquehanna. We are left in doubt until new light is shed on the subject.

**MUHLBERG'S VISIT.**

But we are not in doubt as to the passage through Womelsdorf of two other important characters a

few years and decade later. The first of these was Gen. Peter Muhlenberg, the eldest son of the patriarch, the famous patriot-preacher, whom the poet, T. Buchanan Read in his "Revolutionary Rising," immortalizes for his dramatic renunciation of the preacher's robe for the soldier's uniform at a public Sunday service in Woodstock, Va., where he was pastor at the outbreak of the Revolution. After bravely serving under Washington as general of Virginia troops for the entire duration of the war, he was chosen by the assembly of Virginia to locate bounty lands on the Ohio as part pay for the officers of the Virginia line on continental establishment. So starting in the winter from Philadelphia, in 1784, he journeyed by way of the Trappe, Falckner Swamp, Reading.

Now follows this from his journal: "Feb. 25, lay still at Reading and dined with Squire Levan in company with a number of officers.

"Feb. 26, proceeded to Rev. Schulze's, in Tulpehocken, 17 miles from Reading, when finding myself indisposed, I took some medicine, and continued there until the 28th, when I set out on the excessively cold afternoon, and rode to Col. Kucher's, near Lebanon, and 10 miles from Mr. Schulze's." Mrs. Schulze was the general's sister.

His journal, or dairy, is very interesting reading. By it we learn he traveled as far as present Louisville, Ky., and returned by a lower route and the Shenandoah Valley, Va., passing through Womelsdorf again on his return trip on June 24.

#### JOHN PENN'S TRIP.

The other distinguished visitor was John Penn (son of Richard) the American-born Penn, who on April 9, 1788, rode into town on horseback and spent the night here taking a leisurely trip through the valley up the Susquehanna. He had stopped the same day with his friend, Gov. Thomas Mifflin, then

living at his summer mansion, Angelica, which was the original building of what is now the Berks county almshouse. His diary reveals that on April 7 he arrived at Reading from Philadelphia and after inspecting his manor (Mt. Penn lands) put up at the Witman tavern (present Farmers Bank building). The next day he dined with James Biddle where a number of citizens paid their respects to him and then visited Gen. Mifflin, from then on to Womelsdorf and up the valley to the Susquehanna at John Harris' ferry. He is known to have halted at the old Derry Presbyterian Church (now Hershey), tied his horse near the church edifice and looked around in the burial grounds.

We quote here Penn's journal, or diary:

"April 9—Set off from Reading, accompanied by Mr. Biddle, who was so obliging as to show us the way to Gen. Mifflin's farm, three miles from Reading. Finding the river too deep to foot, we passed at a lower ferry on the road to Lancaster. The General and Mrs. Mifflin received us in a neat farm house, and being very early themselves, provided a second breakfast for us, though it was then only 7:30. He took us round some of his improvements and I rode with him to various points of view which commanded the town of Reading and the circumjacent hills and valleys. He farms about 1,200 acres, and has a Scotch farmer, who conducts the business. One hundred acres of meadow land he waters.

#### AT WOMELSDORF TAVERN.

"General Mifflin with agreeable frankness and affability pressed us both to stay for an early dinner, to which we sat down about 1 o'clock. After dinner I mounted my horse and came into the Carlisle road, about three miles off, at Sinking Spring. About sunset I arrived at Middletown (now Womelsdorf), 14 miles from Reading, and put up at a



tavern, the master of which owned the town and 100 acres in the neighborhood. There is one spot on this road remarkable for its European appearance, the lands all cultivated and a very handsome church upon a hill (Hain's Church). The beauties are principally those of wilderness and romantic; the adjoining hills, being as yet bare of leaves, except where dotted by groups of firs, and being steep and extensive, these circumstances rendered them striking.

The scene of desolation.  
Forlorn and wild,

April 10. Rose by 6 o'clock and after breakfast set out in order to sleep at Harrisburg, the chief town of Dauphin county, and which was proposed to be the seat of government. Passed some mills a few miles from thence at Tulpehocken Creek, which afterwards meets the road somewhat further in a very picturesque spot. On the eastern side of this is a most elegant new Lutheran Church (Christ Lutheran Church, a stone building erected in 1786—two years before). After riding through a village (Myerstown) I came to Lebanon, a handsome town of several hundred inhabitants."

#### ATTRACTED BY CANAL.

The building of the Union Canal—begun in 1791—brought other groups of eminent men to Womelsdorf and the surrounding community. In the year 1791 the state Legislature incorporated the Schuylkill and Susquehanna Navigation Co. at a capitalization of \$400,000. This brought on William Smith, L.L. D., a great promoter of the canal, and David Rittenhouse as the chief engineer to conduct the survey of the canal route and supervise the construction of the locks. During this and the following years they must have been frequent visitors here. We have one exact date when they spent the night here together with even more distinguished persons, lodging at the old, now dismantled, Seltzer House.

It was on Nov. 13, 1793. The first locks had been constructed at the head of the Tulpehocken (at Michael Ley's old homestead, then inhabited by Ley's son and now the Samuel Uhrich property). The seat of our national government was then at Philadelphia. An epidemic of yellow fever had driven it temporarily to Germantown. President Washington, being himself the president of a similar canal company in western Virginia, decided to go on a week's trip of recreation and canal inspection, via Lancaster and Reading. So he gathered about him a few friends in the persons of Robert Morris, the financier of the Revolution and then the owner of the Elizabeth furnace mansion in Lancaster county (now the Coleman mansion, formerly Baron Stiegel's home); William Smith, the provost; David Rittenhouse, the engineer; Tench Francis, the land agent of the Penn estate, and probably Bartholomew Dandridge, the president's private secretary, and probably a few servants.

#### WASHINGTON'S VISIT.

The objective points were Lancaster county scenery, the Morris Mansion at Elizabeth Furnace (where they lodged at least one night), and the Tulpehocken Canal locks, where, at the Ley homestead, and the Womelsdorf hostelry, they lodged for two more nights, respectively. The one spent at Womelsdorf was that of Nov. 13, 1793. It was on this occasion that the party visited Conrad Weiser's grave and where President Washington spoke the words of eulogium over the ashes of our distinguished townsman, which are now engraven upon his monument. It was a great occasion and set this little hamlet into quite a flutter. But Womelsdorf "did itself proud" that evening. Louis Richards, of Reading, in his account of it in a paper before the Historical Society of Berks County, says it outstripped Reading in its befitting greeting and reception extended to the illustrious guests.

"The Revolutionary veterans (soldier boys of the town companies) were soon summoned to pay their military respects, a cannon belched forth a salute, and John Pliny, a local merchant, addressed the president as follows:

"Your Excellency: "May you be kind enough to receive, with your native and customary grace, our joyful demonstrations, which spring from our gratitude and obedience, in this fortunate moment, in which we enjoy the personal presence of your excellency! The wise and happily, successful deeds, which you wrought under the protection of the Almighty and by Him crowned with success in the late glorious war, the favor and contentment which we have enjoyed since then under your administration in times of peace; and your lately recommended neutrality system, so carefully considered and so timely incite all mankind to renewed veneration and love towards you. The inhabitants of this community will never cease to pray long life and health from God in your behalf."

#### **PRESIDENT'S REPLY.**

To this address the President made the following appropriate reply: "The honor which you bestow upon me, and your approval of my endeavors, afford me the greatest pleasure." After which came the salutes and shouts: "Long live George Washington! Long live George Washington!"

It was the following morning when the distinguished visitors went to the grave of Conrad Weiser, where with doffed hat "the father of his country" spoke his brief eulogium concerning the services of this great provincial leader.

President Washington paid a second visit to Womelsdorf the following year. The occasion was the uprising of the inhabitants of the western counties of Pennsylvania against the federal excise laws, known commonly as "the whisky insurrection." The government had

laid a tax upon distilled spirits which was an important local industry in these parts. Due to their distant removal from grain markets and with poor facilities of their shipment in the natural form they resorted to distilling their harvests of grain into whisky and then resisted the collection of the imposed taxes by attacks upon the revenue collectors. The revolt becoming formidable the whole country was thrown into a ferment, and a crucial test case was on hand whether governmental authority was mightier than the resistant but organized will of a small section of its citizens. After repeated proclamations and "notes" by the president had been made for these insurgents to desist from their unlawful acts but all in vain, force was resorted to. Between 12,000 and 13,000 militia from Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland and Virginia were called for to march to the aid of the civil authorities. The governors of these respective states were designated as the commanders of their quota of troops.

#### **MOBILIZED AT CARLISLE.**

The first general rendezvous of these extemporized armies was at Carlisle, and by the last week in September, 1794, the forces were in motion. All the troops from New Jersey and the eastern counties of Pennsylvania, with their commanders, passed up the Lebanon Valley from Reading to Harrisburg, and hence through Womelsdorf. Washington got to Reading—for he was determined to join the expedition in person, to emphasize the purpose of the new government was to secure the execution of its laws—by Oct. 1, and a review of the forces still remaining in town is said to have been held by him. He lodged that night at the Federal Inn, then kept by Michael Wood as landlord, the building now occupied by the Farmers Bank, and appropriately marked by a historical tablet-marker. He was accompanied by his private secretary, Mr. Dandridge, and Hon.



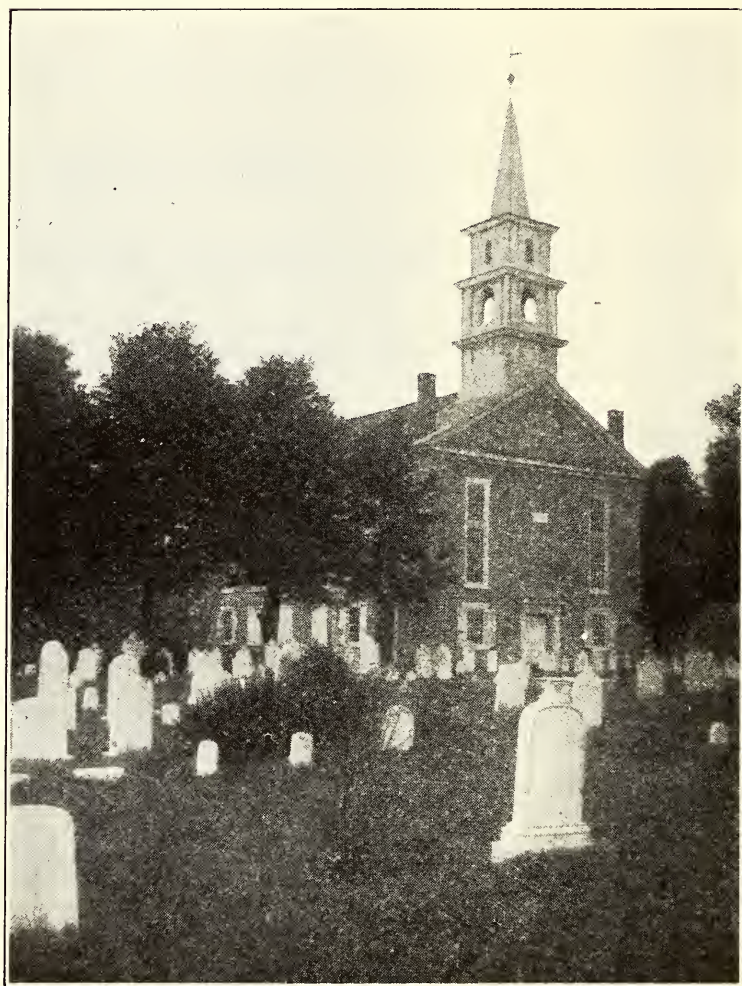
Alexander Hamilton, secretary of the treasury. The President's diary of this trip is interesting reading in this connection. Under date of Wednesday, Oct. 1, we find this entry:

"Reading, Pennsylvania. Left the trap early, and breakfasting at Pottsgrove, 11 miles, we reached Reading to dinner, 19 miles farther, where we found several detachments of infantry and cavalry preparing for their march to Carlisle."

Under date of Oct. 2 the following: "An accident happening to one of my horses occasioned my setting out later than was intended. I got off in time, however, to make a halt (to bait my horses) at Womelsdorf, 14 miles, and to view the canal from Myerstown towards Lebanon, and the locks between the two places, which (four adjoining each other, in the descent from the summit ground along the Tulpehocken built of brick) appeared admirably constructed. Reached Lebanon at night, 28 miles."

#### **TWO VISITS ON RECORD.**

It is a local tradition that upon this occasion the presidential party was entertained for the dinner hour at the Center House, of Womelsdorf, and that Washington was again serenaded. We have no records to substantiate or disprove this claim. We have this clearest documentary proof of the presence of President Washington on two occasions while serving his second term as chief executive of our young nation, the first time to spend the night, the second "to bait his horses" and doubtless to eat his dinner. On both occasions he was accompanied by eminent men among our nation's builders and we should, as citizens of today, almost deem the streets of our borough as holy ground, because of the feet that have walked on them. President Washington twice in Womelsdorf; Alexander Hamilton, Robert Morris, David Rittenhouse, William Smith, Tench Francis, John Penn, Gen. Peter Muhlenberg—all at one time or another in Womelsdorf. Youngsters of our day, straighten up! Stiffen up your backbone."



Old Zion's Church (1792). Womelsdorf, Pa.



## Chapter XVII.

### EMINENT VISITORS

Continuing the story of eminent visitors to Womelsdorf, we have a record that on July 18, 1797, William Henry, John Heckenwelder, John Rothrock and Christian Crewell, Moravian missionaries, returned to Bethlehem from missionary labors at Gnaden-Hutten, Ohio. Whether these, and similar heralds of the cross in that formative period of our country, were not, in reality, the greatest builders of our nation, and therefore among our most eminent men, is not a much doubted or disputed question. Their presence in Womelsdorf and that of other devoted ministers of Christ and lay coworkers in His vineyard constitutes, therefore, a large class of eminent men stretching over all the years of the community's history and embracing more men than we can now name or number, and more occasions than we can recall. We will, therefore, make mention of only the most prominent of them whose presence graced Womelsdorf as the reel of history is unwound.

In this connection let me mention a most illustrious minister who passed through this valley near the middle of the 19th century, whose name as that of a learned scholar has filled many glorious pages in the annals of American church life. He was a German Reformed minister and professor, who rose in America to the highest zenith of theological scholarship and erudition. He made his maiden trips in America, through this valley, after his immigration.

He was the learned Rev. Prof. Philip Schaff, D. D., LL. D., a former student of Dr. Schmid, of Tuebingen; Profs. Tholuck and Muller, of Halle, and of Neander, Twesten and Hengstenberg, of Berlin, Germany, and a young teacher and lecturer (privat-docent) at Berlin, when in 1843 a call to come to America came to him.

#### STRONG RECOMMENDATIONS.

In July, 1843, Revs. Theodore L. Hoffeditz and Benjamin S. Schneck, previously appointed as a committee by the German Reformed Synod of America, went to Germany to place in the hands of Prof. Frederick W.

Krummacher, D. D., a call to a professorship in Mercersburg. Dr. Krummacher, after considerable hesitation, finally declined the call but recommended to the committee young Prof. Schaff. After several interviews Prof. Schaff gave the committee permission to present his name to the synod on their return to America. On their return they presented his name with enthusiasm and the strongest of recommendations to the synod, then in session at Winchester, Va. By a unanimous vote a call was extended to him to the chair of church history and biblical literature in the theological seminary at Mercersburg.

"Urged by his superiors and theological colleagues of Germany to embrace the promising opportunity for his ability and piety, Prof. Schaff accepted the call and turned his face westward to America. When he arrived in New York, July 28, 1844, he spent his first Sunday in that city and preached in German in a Dutch Reformed Church on the significant text, Phil. 3:13. Rev. Bernard C. Wolf, of Easton, one of the Reformed Church's leading men, had been named to welcome the new professor on his arrival. He did so and on Aug. 5 brought him along with him, traveling by train to Somerville, N. J., thence by stage to Easton. There Dr. Hoffeditz, one of the delegates to Germany, met him and accompanied him to Reading.

"Continuing their journey from Reading, Dr. Hoffeditz and Dr. Schaff stopped at Womelsdorf, where the aged Dr. Hendel, a venerable figure in the Reformed Church, then on his deathbed, rejoiced to see the new representative of German theological learning. At Tulpehocken he was entertained by Pastor Leinbach, whom he found serving eight churches—a thing almost, if not altogether, unknown in Germany, and one which struck him as most strange."

#### PROSPEROUS AND HOSPITABLE.

Thus relates his son, Prof. David A. Schaff, Dr. Schaff's biographer, himself a professor at Lane Theological Seminary, of Cincinnati, O.

He describes his journey on to Mercersburg in graphic style. Of Dr. Schaff's impressions of this section, he has this to say: "Dr. Schaff was attracted by the signs of prosperity, in town and country, the ample farm houses, the large and well cultivated farms and the kindness with which he was entertained. Probably nowhere else in the world is a more generous and unstinted hospitality exercised than among the farmers of German descent in Pennsylvania. Everywhere he heard German, not the German of the peasantry, or of the educated classes in Germany, but the colloquial dialect known as Pennsylvania German. He was quick to recognize the good traits of these people, their implicit honesty, uncomplaining industry, thrift, domestic fidelity and warm hospitality. For 20 years he went out and in amongst them, finding sterling virtues, not excelled in degree by any other population in the land."

Dr. Schaff frequently preached in the churches of the Reformed faith, but whether he ever came back to Womelsdorf to visit again, or preach in the local church, the writer cannot say. He probably did, and some octogenarian member may arise on reading this and say that he did and that he heard him. Of this we are certain, that he and Dr. Hoffeditz were guests here of old Dr. Hendel, who resided, I believe, in the house now occupied by Dr. Hamaker's widow, or else next door. Of his appearance then Dr. B. Bausman has left us this pen-sketch: "A sprightly young man, faultlessly attired in black, with black hair and a face as fresh and florid as an Alpine rose; in his lively conversation speaking with his whole body abounding in gestures, graceful and unstudied. \* \* \* His cordial greeting, his smiling face, his lively chat and animated manner soon put me, an awkward, shy country boy, at my ease."

#### **THEOLOGIAN AND HISTORIAN.**

That one of the greatest theologians and church historians of America and Europe, honored in two hemispheres and for 50 years in the limelight of American church life, has walked and dined to our interior little borough is an event not to be forgotten. Who and what he was his epitaph tells in briefest form: "A teacher of theology for 50 years. Historian of the church. President of the American committee of Bible revision. He advocated the reunion of Christendom."

Almost a century before, in 1752, a Lutheran minister, newly migrated

hither from Germany, had made a similar maiden trip through this valley into the interior of Pennsylvania and been agreeably entertained for months by Rev. John Caspar Stoever on the Quittapahilla. He was Rev. John George Bager, and his family—the progenitors of the distinguished Baugher family, who as president and professors of the Lutheran College and Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, in the second and third succeeding generations, added imperishable fame to this ancestral name—who became the settled pastor of the Lutheran Church at Hanover. Years afterward, by a happy and singular coincidence, the grandsons of host and guest occupied positions of honor in Pennsylvania College at Gettysburg, Prof. Martin Luther Stoever as professor of history and Latin for 28 years, and Prof. Henry Louis Baugher, first as professor of Greek and then as president of the college for a period of 36 years. It is altogether probable that the Baugher ancestors traveled from Philadelphia to the Quittapahilla by way of the historic churches up the Schuylkill Valley to Reading, and thence up by Womelsdorf, the Tulpehocken churches and Lebanon to the Quittapahilla.

#### **VANBUREN'S VISIT.**

But Womelsdorf was to be honored by more visits from the Presidents of our nation. Washington and John Adams were not the only chief executives that favored us with their presence. On June 25, 1839, President Martin VanBuren passed through town from Harrisburg to Reading and Easton. A committee of leading citizens came out from Reading as far as Womelsdorf to escort him to that city. The party was met on the west side of the Schuylkill Bridge by a large crowd to give the President an especial welcome to this Democratic stronghold, which had at his election, three years previous, given him a majority of almost four to one over Gen. William Henry Harrison. The procession paraded the streets. While the reception in Womelsdorf was cordial, it was not as demonstrative.

"The President traveled in a carriage and pair, accompanied by one of his sons, and attended by two colored servants, one driving him and the other riding on horseback." In Reading's parade "the President rode on a fine cream-colored horse, and his graceful horsemanship attracted general attention." He left the following day on his way to New York over "the Easton road."



"From an accoount in the "Centennial History of Kutztown" it would appear that ex-President VanBuren paid a second visit to that borough in 1848. It states: "1848, June 26, President VanBuren paid a visit to our town. Does it mean to say that President James K. Polk paid a visit? In either case it was an overland journey and very likely included also the Lebanon Valley and hence Womelsdorf.

#### **AN EXCITING CAMPAIGN.**

It is certain that Presidential Candidate William Henry Harrison passed through this valley in 1836 and visited Womelsdorf in October of this year. Such Whig friends as Gov. Joseph Ritner, Secretary of State Thomas H. Burrowes and Hon-Henry A. Muhlenberg accompanied him on this eastern Pennsylvania campaign tour. So one October day (or night) of this year the citizens of Womelsdorf saw and heard these distinguished spellbinders. That was an exciting campaign, as was also the following presidential election year, 1840, when Mr. Harrison was again the Whig nominee and the successful candidate. The writer often heard his mother relate that she witnessed the Harrison demonstration caused by the party's visit to Kutztown in 1836, near which place she was then residing. "Old Tippecanoe and Tyler, too," "Hard Cider" and "Log Cabin" were shouted with plenty of political enthusiasm.

As Mr. Harrison was elected President in 1840, we can count him as the fourth (really the third in order of time) of the Presidents who have visited Womelsdorf. It is probable that a good many Womelsdorf citizens can yet relate the account of the ox roasts, hard cider flow and speeches which their parents gave them of this event to which they had been eyewitnesses.

Certain it is that one more President visited our town. And this was James Buchanan during his campaign in 1856. There are still those present with us who recall the gigantic demonstration held in town over his election. An ox roast was held in the rear of where the Matthew's hardware shops now are located, which was then the rear yard of a hotel, beyond which was an old orchard, where the speechmaking occurred.

#### **THEN THE RAILROAD.**

After this came the railroad, and more than one candidate or incumbent of the high office has gone up and down the valley by means of the

iron horse and given little towns like ours a wide berth. But we will note a few more visits made by foot, horseback or stage coach before the iron horse snorted and puffed through our valley.

On Feb. 21, 1844, the historian, Prof. I. D. Rupp, visited the town and the grave of Conrad Weiser, as he himself relates in his "History of Berks and Lebanon Counties," and confesses himself "pained to see no enclosure, or fence, around the grave of so great and good a man." This lament seems to have gone out by visitors to this illustrious grave now for almost a century. Time this neglect be corrected and the public-spirited and philanthropic citizens of Berks rise to do fitting honor to this important historical character! Let the movement under foot now by the Historical Society of Berks County be promptly and liberally encouraged.

#### **RETURNING VETERANS.**

In July, 1848, some of the returning soldiers of the Mexican War passed through Womelsdorf by stage from Harrisburg on their way to Reading. Did the town folks give them a hearty cheer? Alas! hardly one is left to have a clear remembrance of the occasion!

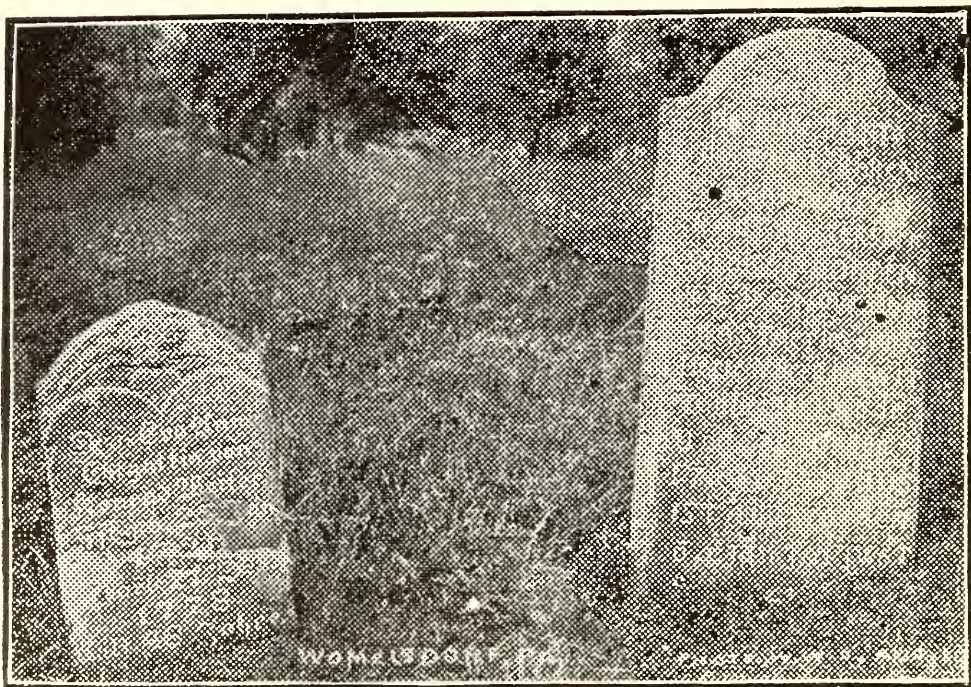
What distinguished men the building of the Lebanon Valley Railroad, the period of the Civil War, the political campaigns of state and nation since Buchanan's day, the lecture and entertainment courses and the affairs of big or little business have brought to Womelsdorf I will let for the students of the passing generation to search out. Had our town been able to maintain a newspaper all this while, these historical events would all be preserved and available for reference. Just this last campaign brought both the Republican and Democratic gubernatorial, congressional and U. S. senatorial candidates to our midst; but without such a record of events as a daily or even weekly newspaper publishes the fact and occasion speedily fade out of mind.

#### **BETHANY HOME VISITORS.**

A few more great men have appeared in connection with the development of the Bethany Orphans' Home, of whom and of which events the chapter on its history makes mention. It includes such leaders of the Reformed Church as Drs. John W. Nevin, Thomas C. Porter, C. Z. Weiser, E. E. Higbee, B. Bausman and others; as well as John

Wanamaker, State Supt. J. P. Wickersham and others of other folds. Church conferences have brought bishops and religious leaders hither from among all the denominations here represented. The writer recalls hearing Bishop Dubbs, of the Evangelical Church, preach here in the summer of 1879, and so have the other denominations represented in town doubtless had their "brightest lights" shine forth here at some time or other.

We have, however, given enough instances of visits by eminent men of church and state, profession and business, official and educational rank, to assure all readers that Womelsdorf of Berks, like Tarsus of Paul's birth, is "no mean city." We want the present youth of our town to tread softly, study diligently, think soberly, aspire nobly and always act honorably, for they are walking on hallowed and historic ground.



Mr. and Mrs. Conrad Weiser's Graves



## Chapter XVIII.

## OUR MOST ILLUSTRIOUS FAMILY

There is no doubt but that the family and descendants of Conrad Weiser constitute Womelsdorf's most illustrious domestic group. A brief history of it, together with its genealogical branches and the achievements of this lineage during half a dozen generations within the past two centuries, will form too important and interesting a chapter to be omitted from these "annals."

The life of Conrad Weiser is comparatively well known to the historical reader. It has been often told in addresses and summarized in brief sketches. There have been at least three different biographies published of him to the writer's own knowledge. Yet there is a woeful ignorance of the real greatness of this man, even in the county where he spent the best, the ripest and most active half of his life. The achievements and public services of this important character during the provincial period of our state and nation must be told again and again, "lest we forget! lest we forget!"

His own brief autobiography, up to the time of taking up his home in Berks county, which the writer once had the good fortune of having in his hand for the purpose of making a transcript of its beautiful and simple German, must form the preliminary or initial story to his career, which is to follow, and which was enacted here at Womelsdorf during the last and most strenuous 30 years of his life. We give here a translation of this autobiography written in his native tongue in a small blank book, about three by six inches. It had descended into the possession of Michael Kalbach, a lineal descendant, of Womelsdorf, from whence it passed into the hands of the late Jacob S. Livingood, of Reading, who later deposited it as a choice historic treasure among the archives of the Pennsylvania Historical Society library, of Philadelphia.

## WEISER'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

This autobiography as translated by the late Dr. H. H. Muhlenberg, of Reading, follows:

On Nov. 2, 1696, I, Conrad Weiser, was born in Europe, in the land of Wurtemberg, in the county (amt) of Herrenberg; the village is called Astaet, and was christened at Kupingen, nearby, as my father has informed me. I say, I was born on Nov. 2, 1696. My father's name was John Conrad Weiser; my mother's name was Anna Magdalena; her family name was Uebele. My grandfather was Jacob Weiser; my great-grandfather also Jacob Weiser. He was magistrate (Schultheiss) in the village of Great Aspach, in the county (amt) of Backnang, also in the land of Wurtemberg. In this latter village my ancestors from time immemorial were born and are buried there as well on my father's as my mother's side. In 1709 my mother passed into eternity on the last day of May, in the 43d year of her age, leaving children, Catrina, Margaretta Magdalena, Sabin, Conrad, George Frederick, Christopher, Barbara, John Frederick, and was buried there by the side of my ancestors. She was a God-fearing woman and much beloved by her neighbors. Her motto was, 'Jesus Christ, I live for thee, I die for thee, thine am I in life and death.'

"In the year above mentioned, namely in 1709, my father moved away from Great Aspach on June 24, and took eight children with him. My eldest sister, Catrina, remained there with her husband, Conrad Boss, with whom she had two children. My father sold them his house, fields, meadows, vineyard and garden, but they could only pay him 75 gulden, the remainder, 600 gulden, was to be paid to my father at a subsequent period, which was never done, so it was made a present to them. In about two months we reached London, England, along with several thousand Germans, whom Queen Anne, of glorious memory, had taken in charge, and was fur-

ishing with food. About Christmas Day we embarked, and 10 shiploads, with about 4,000 souls, were sent to America.

#### AT LIVINGSTONE'S MANOR.

"On June 13, 1710, we came to anchor at New York in North America, and in the same autumn were taken to Livingstone's Manor at the expense of the queen. Here in Livingstone's, or as it was called by the Germans, Loewenstein's Manor, we were to burn tar, and cultivate hemp, to repay the expenses incurred by the queen in bringing us from Holland to England, and from England to New York. We were directed by several commissioners, viz. John Cast, Henry Meyer, Richard Seykott, who were put in authority over us by Robert Hunter, governor of New York. But neither object succeeded and in 1713 the people were discharged from their engagements and declared free. Then the people scattered themselves over the whole province of New York. Many remained where they were. About 150 families determined to remove to Schochary (a place about 40 English miles to the west of Albany). They therefore sent deputies to the land of the Maquas to consult with the Indians about it, who allowed them to occupy Schochary. For the Indian deputies who were in England at the time the German people were lying in tents on the Blackmoor, had made a present to Queen Anne of this Schochary, that she might settle these people upon it. Indian guides were sent to show the Germans where Schochary was. My father was the first of the German deputies.

"In November, 1713, when the above mentioned deputies had returned from the Maqua country to Livingstone's manor, the people moved the same autumn to Albany and Schenectady, so as to be able to move in the spring to Schochary. Bread was dear, but the people worked very hard for a living, and the old settlers were very kind and did much good to the Germans, although some of a different disposition were not wanting. My father reached Schenectady the same fall, where he remained with his family over winter, with a man named John Meyndert.

#### AMONG THE INDIANS.

"A chief of the Maqua nation named Quaynant visited my father, and they agreed that I should go with Quaynant into his country to

learn the Maqua language. I accompanied him and reached the Maqua country in the latter end of November, and lived with the Indians. Here I suffered much from the excessive cold, for I was but badly clothed; and towards spring also from hunger, for the Indians had nothing to eat. A bushel of Indian corn was worth five to six shillings. And at this period the Indians, when drunk, were so barbarous, that I was frequently obliged to hide from drunken Indians.

"In the spring of 1714 my father removed from Schnectady to Schochary, with about 150 families in great poverty. One borrowed a horse here, another there, also a cow and plow-harness. With these things they united and broke up jointly so much land that they raised nearly enough corn for their own consumption the following year. But this year they suffered much from hunger, and made many meals on the wild potatoes and ground beans, which grew in great abundance in that place. The Indians called the potatoes *ochna-nada*, the ground beans *otach-ragara*. When we wished for meal we had to travel 35 to 40 miles to get it, and had then to borrow it on credit. They would get a bushel of wheat here, a couple at another place, and were often absent from home three or four days before they could reach their suffering wives and children, crying for bread.

"The people had settled in villages, of which there were seven. The first and nearest, Schnectady, was called Kneskern-dorf; second, Gerlach-dorf; third, Fuchsen-dorf; fourth, Hans George Schmidts-dorf; fifth, Weisers-dorf, or Brunnen-dorf; sixth, Hartmans-dorf; seventh, Ober Weisers-dorf. So named after the deputies who were sent from Livingstone's Manor to the Maqua country.

#### MASTERED MAQUA TONGUE.

"Towards the end of July I returned from among the Indians to my father, and had made considerable progress or had learned the greater part of the Maqua language. An English mile from my father's house there lived several Maqua families, and there were always Maquas among us hunting, so that there was always something for me to do in interpreting, but without pay. There was no one else to be found among our people who understood the language, so that I gradually became completely master of



the language, so far as my years and other circumstances permitted.

"Here now this people lived peaceably for several years without preachers or magistrates. Each one did as he thought proper. About this time I became very sick and expected to die, and was willing to die, for my stepmother was indeed a stepmother to me. By her influence my father treated me very harshly. I had no other friend and had to bear hunger and cold. I often thought of running away, but the sickness mentioned put a bit in my mouth; I was bound as if by a rope to remain with my father and obey him.

"I have already mentioned that my father was a widower when he left Germany and landed in 1710 with eight children in New York, where my two brothers, George Frederick and Christopher, were bound by the governor, with my then sick father's consent, over to Long Island. The following winter my youngest brother, John Frederick, died in the sixth year of his age, and was buried in Livingstone's bush, as the expression then was, and was the first one buried where now the Reformed Church in Weisersdorf stands.

"In the year 1711 my father married my stepmother, whom I have mentioned above. It was an unhappy match and was the cause of my brothers and sisters all becoming scattered. At last I was the only one left at home, except the three children he had by my stepmother, viz: John Frederick, Jacob and Rebecca. Everything went crab fashion, one misfortune after another happened to our family, of which I always was partaker. I frequently did not know where to turn and learned to pray to God and His word became my most agreeable reading.

#### SOLD TO MERCHANTS.

"But to return to Schochary. The people had taken possession without informing the governor of New York, who, after letting them know his dissatisfaction, sold the land to seven rich merchants, four of whom lived in Albany; the other three in New York. The names of those in Albany were Myndert Shyller, John Shyller, Robert Livingstone and Peter Van Brygess; of those of New York, were George Clerk, at that time secretary; Dr. Stadts and Rip Van Dam. Upon this a great uproar arose in Schochary and Albany, be-

cause many people in Albany wished the poor people to retain their lands. The people of Schochary divided into two parties; the strongest did not wish to obey, but to keep the land, and therefore sent deputies to England to obtain a grant from George the First, not only for Schochary, but for more land in addition. But the plans did not succeed according to their wishes, for in the first place the deputies had to leave secretly and embarked at Philadelphia in 1817. As soon as they got to sea they fell into the hands of pirates, who robbed them as well as the crew of their money, but then let them free.

"My father, who was one of the deputies, was three times tied up and flogged, but would not confess to having money; finally, William Scheff, the other deputy, said to the pirates, 'This man and I have a purse in common and I have already given it to you, he has nothing to give you.' Upon which they let him go free. The ship had to put into Boston to purchase necessities for the crew and passengers in place of those taken by the pirates. When they reached England they found times had changed and that there was no longer a Queen Anne on the throne. They still found some of the old friends and advocates of the Germans among whom were the chaplains at the King's German Chapel, Messrs. Boehn and Roberts, who did all in their power. The affairs of the deputies finally reached the lords commissioners of trade and plantations and the governor of New York, Robert Hunter, was called home. In the meanwhile the deputies got into debt; Walrath, the third deputy, became homesick, and embarked on a vessel bound to New York, but died at sea. The other two were thrown into prison; they wrote in time for money, but owing to the ignorance and overconfidence of the persons who had the money to transmit which the people had collected, it reached England very slowly. In the meanwhile Robert Hunter had arrived in England, had arranged the sale of the Schochary lands in his own way, before the board of trade and plantations. The opposite party was in prison, without friends or money. Finally when a bill of exchange for 70 pounds sterling arrived, they were released from prison, petitioned anew, and in the end got an order to the newly arrived governor of New York, William Burnett, to grant vacant land to the Germans who had been sent to New York by the deceased Queen Anne.

**SENT TO THE GOVERNOR.**

"Towards the end of 1720 this William Burnet arrived in New York. In the commencement of 1721 I was sent to New York with a petition to Gov. Burnet. He appeared friendly and stated what kind of an order from the lords of trade and plantations he brought with him, which he was resolved to comply with, but deputies were yet in England, not content with the decision, but could get nothing more done. In the last-named year, viz., 1721, William Scheff returned home, having quarreled with my father; they both had hard heads. At last, in November, 1723, my father also returned. Scheff died six weeks after his return.

"Gov. Burnet gave patents for land to the few who were willing to settle in the Maqua country, namely, in Stony Arabia, and above the falls, but none on the river, as the people hoped. They, therefore, scattered. The larger part removed to the Maqua country or remained in Schochary and bought the land from the before-named rich men.

"The people got news of the land on Suataro and Tulpehocken, in Pennsylvania; many of them united and cut a road from Schochary to the Susquehanna River, carried their goods there, and made canoes, and floated down the river to the mouth of the Suataro Creek (Swatara), and drove their cattle over land. This happened in 1723. From there they came to Tulpehocken, and this was the origin of the Tulpehocken settlement. Others followed this party and settled there, at first, also, without the permission of the proprietary of Pennsylvania or his commissioners; also against the consent of the Indians from whom the land had not yet been purchased. There was no one among the people to govern them, each one did as he pleased, and their obstinacy has stood in their way ever since. Here I will leave them for a time and describe my own circumstances.

**MARRIED IN 1720.**

"In 1720, while my father was in England I married my Ann Eve, and was given her in marriage by Rev. John Frederick Heger, Reformed clergyman, on Nov. 22, in my father's house in Schochary.

"On Sept. 7, 1722, my son, Philip, was born, and was baptized by John Bernhard von Duehren, Lutheran clergyman; his sponsors were Philip Brown and wife.

On Jan. 13, 1725, my daughter, Anna Malinda, was born; was baptized by John Jacob Oehl, Reformed clergyman; her sponsors were Christian Bouch, jr., and my sister, Barbara.

"On June 24, 1727, my daughter, Maria, was born, and was baptized by William Christopher Birkenmeyer, Lutheran clergyman. Her sponsors were Nickolas Feg and wife.

"On Dec. 24, 1728, my son, Frederick, was born; was baptized by John Bernhard von Duehren, Lutheran clergyman; his sponsors were Nickolas Feg and wife.

"These four were born to me at Schochary. Afterwards, namely, in 1729, I removed to Pennsylvania, and settled in Tulpehocken, where the following children were born to me, namely:

"On Feb. 27, 1730, my son, Peter, was born and on Feb. 15, 1731, I had two sons born, who were called Christopher and Jacob; the first lived 15 weeks, the latter 13 weeks, when they were released from the evils of this world and taken to a happy eternity.

"On June 19, 1732, my daughter, Elizabeth, was born.

"On Jan. 28, 1734, my daughter, Margaret, was born.

"On April 23, 1735, my son, Samuel, was born.

"On July 18, 1736, I had again a son born to me. I called him Benjamin; when he was three months old, the care of the Almighty God took him away; the same year my daughter, Elizabeth, followed him. A merciful God will give them all to me again, to the honor of His glory.

"On Aug. 11, 1740, another son was born. I called his name, Jabez. The mercy of God removed him from the evil of these days when he was 17 days old.

"On Feb. 27, 1742, another daughter was born. I called her name Hanna; the following Aug. 11 she went into a happy eternity.

**DEATH OF DAUGHTER.**

"March 16, of this year, my dear daughter, Madlina, went from time to eternity, through an easy death, after a long and tedious illness. Her faith, consolation and refuge was in the crucified saviour, Jesus Christ, whom she had vowed herself to in



days of health, with soul and body.  
"On Aug. 12, 1744, my son, Benjamin, was born."

Thus far the story of Conrad Weiser's ancestry, birth, immigration to America, trials, Indian experiences, home, studies and hardships of unfriendly domestic relations, the bitter years in New York province, poverty, defraudings by land sharks, disappointments and trials of many kinds which befell their family in common with others, then his marriage, the birth and baptism of his children: his removal to Penn-

sylvania and settlement in the Tulpehocken region; more births and deaths, until the year 1744.

Surely this was a rough and a checkered schooling. It was laying the foundation in hardships and eventful trials—just such as often happen to men of God, who are to become instruments in His hand for great service to humanity. We shall see in our next how the divine Providence used him in his day and his offspring after him to serve this new country of America in its formative period.



Heinrich Melchior Mühlberg  
**Rev. Henry Melchior Muhlenberg**



## Chapter XIX.

### OUR MOST ILLUSTRIOUS FAMILY

Our last chapter told the story of Conrad Weiser's life before and until he was settled in the Tulpehocken region of Pennsylvania. He was in his 34th year, was married and the father of four children; had mastered the Indian language and the English, besides his native German; had had a long course in the school of adversity and hardship, and was now widened, deepened, hardened, seasoned and ripened by these eventful years so that he was ready for service in a new environment amid the swiftly changing, formatively-molding and stormy pioneer experiences of his new and permanent home in Pennsylvania.

About the little stone homestead, a little to the east of the present town of Womelsdorf, cluster an activity and experience that in greatness and multiplicity of service to the local community and the country at large have written the name of Weiser high and ineffaceably upon the country's tablet of honor and fame. Here were spent another 31 years of the most crowded activities, years of wide and varied and expert service that must forever link his name with the greatest and most influential of our nation-builders. And here was reared a family that in its descent and ramifications has added luster to the name of their progenitor to this very day.

#### A LEADING FIGURE.

To show the real greatness of this character, this head of Womelsdorf's most illustrious family one need only summarize the most salient public service he rendered his community and the unfolding country at large, during the pioneer days of his own community and the provincial years of the Colonies, evolving slowly into a federated national life, by the influx of steady streams of European immigration for many decades and admixture and merging of these populations into a loyal united whole, through the processes of the common tasks of interior development and the furnace fires of a long protracted war (French and Indian War of eight years' duration). In all these prob-

lems Conrad Weiser took a leading, a conspicuous part with headquarters here at Tulpehocken, "Heidelberg," "Weiser's," and by whatever name his home was indicated in the old voluminous correspondence, colonial records or state maps of Pennsylvania, where after his passing the town of Womelsdorf sprung up partly on his own land, and where still his old homestead and grave and new monument are kept and revered as precious, historic landmarks.

To crowd the greatness of a man, the size of Conrad Weiser, and the deeds of only half the years of his lifetime into a few paragraphs is about as difficult as it would be to force back an outbranching oak of a century's growth in an open favored space into its original acorn.

#### EFFECTS FIRST TREATY.

Already in 1731 Shekallamy discovers him in Tulpehocken and prevails on him to accompany him to the provincial council at Philadelphia, where he meets Governor Gordon, who learns to appreciate him, and now his career as an Indian interpreter begins in a new colony. In August, 1732, the Six Nations' Federation of Indian Tribes chose him with Shekallamy as their trusty mediaries and interpreters, and at their hands the first treaty between them and the council of Penn's colony was satisfactorily effected. Onandaga, in central, or rather northern New York, was the capital or council camp. Weiser, in three years, stepped out of his Tulpehocken obscurity into the position of an official and historical character.

The Indians of all tribes and nations trusted him and employed him constantly in all their negotiations with the colonies. He is always the pivot-man. Through him the treaty of 1732 was confirmed before President Logan and the council at his home at Stenton in 1736, Governor Thomas Penn, the Indian chiefs and many other dignitaries being present and Weiser being interpreter and mediator. In 1737 Weiser traveled to Onandaga, in the dead of winter, for 500 miles through a path-

less wilderness to negotiate a treaty between Governor Gooch, of Virginia, and the Six Nations. His name now occurs constantly upon the colonial records, where colonial minutes are preserved for us. In 1738 he makes the journey to Onandaga again, not in a civil capacity, but as interpreter for Bishop Spangenberg and his Moravian missionaries to the Indians.

#### APPOINTED A JUSTICE.

His community interests, civil and religious, were not neglected. Already in 1739-40 we find him active in an endeavor to erect a new county, though his efforts only were realized in the formation of Berks county in 1752. His local church oft sought his advice in a long and troublesome controversy. While yet a part of Lancaster county, in 1741, he was appointed and commissioned a justice of the peace for Heidelberg township, then quite extensive. In 1742 council allowed him £36, 18s. 3d. for "the many signal services" performed by him. This same year another tribe ratified a deed for land along the Schuylkill, given a few years before. The instrument holds the signatures of both Benjamin Franklin and Conrad Weiser. He also accompanied Count Zinzendorf to Shamokin, this year, and aided him in the establishment of his Christian mission among the Indians there.

In 1743 Governor Thomas sent him to Shamokin on official business, in January and February. In April of the same year he repeated the trip and errand in behalf of the colonies of Maryland and Virginia. In June he was sent to Onandaga to deliver the good-will of the governor and council of Virginia and hand over his report or journal by August 1, to the governor. In April, 1744, Governor Thomas dispatched Weiser to the chiefs at Shamokin to demand satisfaction for the massacre at Juniata of John Armstrong and his two servants, Indian traders, with the result that the Delawares acknowledged their bloody deed, and the culprits were imprisoned at Lancaster and later hanged at Philadelphia. In June and July the great council was held in Lancaster. The governor and commissioners from Virginia and Maryland were there. Conrad Weiser interpreted. A deed was executed by which all lands claimed by the Indians in the provinces of Virginia and Maryland were released. The Indians demanded that Weiser sign the instrument with his Indian name as well as his English. This was Tarachawagon.

#### MESSAGE OF CONDOLENCE.

In September of this year Weiser again was sent with a message of condolence at the death of a chief among the Onandagas. In 1744 he built a house for Shekallamy at Shamokin in 17 days, at the chiefs' request. In 1745 he gave his eldest daughter in marriage to the Rev. Henry Melchoir Muhlenberg, the Lutheran church leader in America. In October of that year he was in New York, surrounded by Indian chiefs. His mission was to hold the eastern tribes loyal to the English in the on-coming war between England and France.

In 1747 Governor John Penn died and he was charged to carry the sad news to the Indians at Shamokin. In October he wrote to Secretary Peters, asking the propriety of making handsome presents to the Indians on the Ohio and Lake Erie, "since they, by their situation, were capable of doing much mischief, if they should turn to the French." In November, he was again at Shamokin, ministering to Shekallamy, his old friend, and friend of the province, who was very ill, together with his family, and quite poor. All had the fever. Three out of his family had already died and been buried. With the aid of a Dr. Graeme he ministered to them for three days and proved himself a good samaritan, for by this time the sick were recovering. He afterwards induced the government to send them provisions and clothing for the winter, which his son, "Sammy," delivered before the cold weather set in.

#### WAR CLOUDS GATHER.

The European war clouds between Great Britain and France crossed the ocean and a coming conflict cast its shadows before. Conrad Weiser was called upon to prove the saviour of his adopted country. If the French got the Indians universally arrayed against the English colonies the conflict would have been one-sided. Conrad Weiser alone could deal with these tribes. He hastened to Paxtang to prevent the Indians about this place from going over to the French. In 1747 and '48 he attended council meetings and on Aug. 11, 1748, set out from his Tulpehocken home as envoy to the Indians located on the Ohio river, on a long and hazardous journey, from which he did not return till Oct. 2. He delivered the several thousand pounds as "a suitable bribe" from the three provinces of Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia to hold these hitherto friendly tribes continuously



loyal. In August, 1749, he was again in Philadelphia interpreting for the Indians of various tribes. In 1750 he journeyed again to Onandaga at the rebuest of Hon. Thomas Lee, president of the province of Virginia, on Indian affairs, on a two months' absence. In May, 1751, the governor wanted him again to go on a second mission to the Ohio Indians, but he sent a substitute, while he went to Albany in June on a more important mission, and in August interpreted at Philadelphia. In 1752 he again aided the Moravian missionaries among the Six Nations, and in 1752, Governor Dinwiddie, of Virginia, sent him to Albany on a most important mission. In a month he was back in Philadelphia, and in September spent several weeks among the representatives of the Six Nations and representatives of the Six Nations and other tribes at Carlisle.

#### HELPED FOUND READING.

His community duties were not neglected. He had meanwhile helped to found the city of Reading, established himself here in business as the proprietor of the first store, invested in half a dozen building lots on its laid out streets, subscribed to a petition for a highway between Reading and Easton, helped to organize Trinity Lutheran Church in Reading (for he now resided here), and wrote a dedication hymn for the dedication of the first edifice; was made a member of the board of trustees of a school of instruction in Philadelphia, principally for German youths, established by a company of benevolent men of London, out of which doubtless grew later our University of Pennsylvania. His fellow trustees were Governor James Hamilton, Chief Justice Allen, Richard Peters, secretary of the province; Benjamin Franklin, Rev. Dr. William Smith and Rev. Michael Schlatter. Besides Berks county had been established and he was appointed the first judge.

But the long coming storm broke out at last. The French and Indian War crossed the Atlantic and was to be fought out to a finish here in the colonies. Possession of the Ohio river territory was the crux and first objective. The French owned the territory bent like a bow from Quebec, via the St. Lawrence, the Great Lakes, and the Mississippi to New Orleans, and claimed the tributaries of the Mississippi—hence the Ohio river territory. The English occupied a narrow strip along the Atlantic seaboard, 1,000 miles in length, and claimed the territory

westward of the Alleghenies, without limit. Already numerous forts had been erected, Fort Pitt among them, at the junction of the two branches of the Ohio. But two nations can no easier occupy the same territory than two automobiles can pass each other on the same spot. The conflict was inevitable. Pennsylvania became a large part of the battlefield. Then followed the General Braddock campaign and defeat. The onrolling cyclone of massacre and devastation moved eastward to the Susquehanna and its tributaries, to the very regions of the Tulpehocken.

#### TRIBES HELD LOYAL.

But Conrad Weiser had done his work. The eastern tribes of Indians were held loyal to the English. It proved the balance of war and saved the day for the colonies. It was the pivotal point upon which the future character of our nation turned. But it was the Providence that determined the future of our great land. And without doubt Conrad Weiser was one of the greatest of factors of human instrumentalities in deciding, or guiding it, turning a threatening fate into a fortunate victory.

Not only wise and diplomatic in council, he was also shrewd and courageous in action in this long and bitter war. He led in person a local regiment against the invading foe. He informed the government of the depredations and dangers on this frontier, and assisted and supervised the erection of a chain of fortifications along the Blue Mountains, between the Delaware and Susquehanna, which were manned and supplied with provisions and ammunition by his commission's supervision, and the war of repression successfully carried on. Now in quick succession many conferences were held with the Indians, and Weiser was always an essential member.

His life was crowded with urgent public duties down to his end. His infirmities, already manifest at the outbreak of the war, grew upon him from year to year, until the summer of 1760, before the war was finally concluded, he was suddenly seized with an acute attack of colic, while on a visit to his old home (residence now of his son, Philip) in Heidelberg, where on Sunday, July 13, he died and was laid to rest in his private family burial plot a few days later amid fitting funeral services. Who will not recognize Conrad Weiser as a great man—one of the greatest, indeed, in the colonial period of our state and national life?

And who does not recognize that his illustrious and numerous offspring can point with pride to so worthy an ancestor?

#### ANCESTRAL SETTING.

We set out under this chapter heading to give an account of this most illustrious family of the Womelsdorf community—the family of Conrad Weiser, and have now given briefly the ancestral setting of it. What follows will be an endeavor to picture the lines of descendants that have come from this ancestral stem. From his own autobiography we have learned that he had 15 children in all, of whom only seven reached their majority, and survived him. These, as mentioned in his will, are in the order of their birth, the following: Philip, Anna Maria, Frederick, Peter, Margaret, Samuel and Benjamin. From the way a tree grows, or a forest may be propagated from a single acorn, or a field spread over with blossoms from a single seed, if you but give it time enough, so may from the loins of one ancestor in course of time spring an almost innumerable company. It was the promise of God to Abraham, fulfilled in the Jewish nation and race, that they should be as the sands of the sea for multitude, and as the stars in the heavens, innumerable.

It has almost come to be so in the offspring of Conrad Weiser within 200 years. His descendants have now come down to the seventh generation, and in some lines lapped over into the eighth generation, and while we have but one family tree fully traced out, that of Anna Marie Muhlenberg, it may easily be reckoned out from the one that if all lines were followed out to the present day, the descendants' names would run up to a list of over 10,000. The Muhlenberg line alone runs over 1,500.

#### MUHLENBERG FAMILY TREE.

It was the painstaking work of the late Dr. Muhlenberg, of Reading. I understand, who constructed this elaborate and unique family tree, a copy of which a kind friend, a member of the family, has furnished me for study. It is constructed in the form of rings or zones of circumference, like the zones of our globe, beginning with the marriage of the Rev. Henry Melchoir Muhlenberg and Anna Marie Weiser exhibited on the inner circle, then their offspring and the marriage of their seven matured children in the second circle, and so on widening out into the eighth

circle, or zone, and carefully embracing each family line of descent in a certain limited segment of this ever-widening field to the surface rim, on which are marked the numbers up to 12 of a clock dial, which spaces are again sub-divided into 60 minute marks, so that an alphabetical list of names (embracing about 200 different surnames) may be very readily found, the generation or circle being given together with its place on the clock. It commends itself to one as a most ingenious device for a family tree.

In this one branch of the Weiser family, the Muhlenberg line, are many names, which are written high upon our nation's tablets of honor. The very first generation of seven grown and married children is universally conspicuous for noblest service and highest rank. We shall presently trace this lineage and point out the distinctive public stations many have filled and the high honors attained.

#### INTERWOVEN NAMES.

The following family names are interwoven into this Muhlenberg branch alone, viz.: Albright, Arden, Baer, Baume, Bailey, Baldwin, Ball, Barches, Barnhart, Bayard, Beale, Beck, Bedlow, Bennetch, Bittner, Bonine, Boone, Brooke, Budd, Bulkey, Burchell, Burkitt, Burroughs, Cameron, Cammann, Caudis, Carter, Cassidy, Chalfant, Chapin, Chapman, Chessman, Chisohn, Churchill, Ciriacy-Wantrup, Clingan, Clarke, Coleman, Condit, Cooper, Coursen, Craig, Crary, Cunningham, Cutter, Dailey, Day, Dean, DeFrees, Deininger, Delino, Dubois, Duchman, Dulles, Dunn, Edgar, Edwards, Ege, Eigenbrodt, Elliott, Ermentrout, Evans, Farnsworth, Fehr, Fell, Felt-housen, Fichtorn, Fidler, Fisher, Franklin, Fredericks, Freehafer, Gallatin, Garber, Garretson, Gevenot, Gilbert, Gilson, Goessling, Goldsborough, Gotwald, Gregg, Griffin, Griffith, Grubb, Hall, Hamersley, Hancock, Harbach, Harner, Harris, Hart, Hess, Hiester, Hoffman, Hoogewerff, Hugn, Huffnagle, Hunter, Immel, Irick, Irwin, Jackson, Jaffray, James, Jerems, Jones, Kenneedy, Keyser, Kidder, Kimmel, King, Kluepfel, Kulenkampff, Kress, Kunze, Kurtz, Laumann, Lawrence, Lind, Look, Lorillard, Lynch, McClean, McCulloch, McElroy, McFarland, McIlvaine, McKnight, McLene-gan, McManus, McCrory, McSherry, Mali, Martine, Matthews, Maylen, Meier, Meiersmith, Meyer, Miller, Mills, Monbert, Moore, Morley, Morrell, Morris, Muhlenberg, Mulliken, Murray, Musser, Myers, Nagle, New-

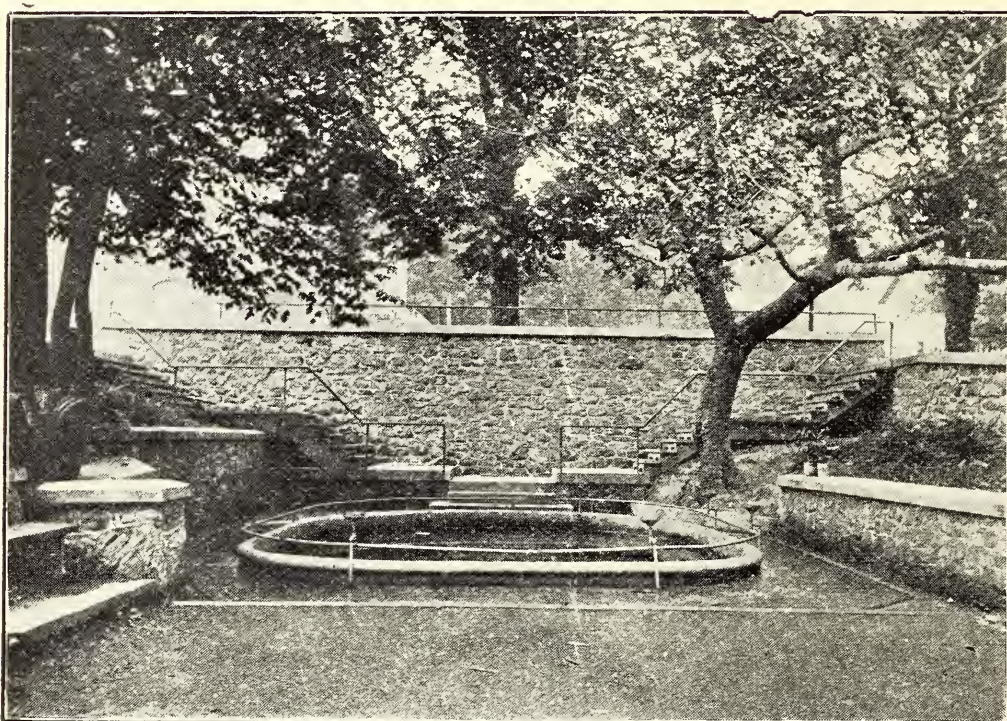


bold, Nicolls, Nielson, Noltenius, Oakeley, Olcott, Orb, Otto, Paris, Parker, Patterson, Pauli, Peck, Perkins, Pfeiffer, Philley, Platt, Plientinger, Porter, Prentiss, Plunnet, **Rambo**, Reeder, Reid, Reicart, Rex, Rhoades, Richards, Rick, Rine, Robeson, Rodman, Rogers, Roland, Rush, Sanford, Saunders, Schaeffer, Schaun, Schenck, Schmucker, Schrader, Schulze, Schwab, Seachrist, Seiler, Seiss, Shaw, Sheaff, Shepherd, Schieffelin, Sick, Smith, Snodgrass, Spaeth, Spencer, Sperry, Stauffer, Stevens, Stewart, Stockton, Strahan, Streater, Sutton, Swain, Taylor, Teed, Thomas, Thomson, Tiedemann,

Tullidge, Turnbull, Tuttle, Valentine, Vanderslice, VanLear, VanReed, Vaughan-Jones, VonPost, Waite, Walker, Wallace, Ward, Waters, Watmough, Weir, Weiser, West, Westcott, Weston, Weyman, Wharton, Whitlock, Wheeler, White, Williams, Willing, Withers, Wilcox, Woodman, Woolsey, Worrell, Yonge, Yorke and Zieber.

Addenda—Bow, Barto, Gascoione, Kerekot, Herrick, Hutchingson, McLenegan, Sanger and Schunder.

Of these the Barto, Ege, Fidler, Smith, Stauffer, Schulze, Valentine and Vanderslice names belong to Womelsdorf.



**Bethany's Cooling Springs**



## Chapter XX.

## OUR MOST ILLUSTRIOUS FAMILY

We shall now trace the seven various branches of the Conrad Weiser family down as far as we are able, and point out the most illustrious members of each line. The difficulty lies that none of the others have published their family history like the Muhlenbergs; so we can only point out a few shining lights, whom we know to have come out of the other lines.

First—Philip Weiser, the oldest son of Conrad, died less than a year after his father, March 27, 1761, aged 38 years, 5 months and 4 days and left three small sons at the time of his death. He had lived a few years on the old homestead and is said to have been wounded in the war (French and Indian) from which effects his life was doubtless shortened.

The eldest son of Philip was John Conrad, who figured prominently in the Revolutionary War. He was the father of 12 children of whom eight lived to maturity as follows: Benjamin, Frederick, John Conrad, Daniel, Sophia (Mrs. Schawber), Hannah (Mrs. Rhoads), Mary (Mrs. Holstein), and Catharine (Mrs. Bassler). The Holsteins lived in Mill Creek Valley and the Basslers in the Tulpehocken Valley, west of Myerstown, and the families are well connected. Although Conrad, the father, is known to have settled later in Snyder county, in the neighborhood of Selinsgrove, part of which town was originally known as Weisersburg, it is believed some of the family remained behind at Womelsdorf, as a Benjamin Weiser is known to have been in the store business here after the Revolution, while Benjamin, the youngest son of Conrad, the interpreter, had already changed his residence to Selinsgrove and had gone on a long, vain chase to reclaim his father's forfeited estate in New York. So very probably this grandson's (Conrad's) eldest son, Benjamin, was the father of the late Rev. Dr. Reuben Weiser, born in Womelsdorf, Dec. 29, 1807, the son of Benjamin and Catharine (Hide) Weiser, who served the Lutheran Church for over 50 years as teacher, principal of two female seminaries,

financial agent of Gettysburg College and pastor of various churches, the last 13 years of his life in Georgetown, Col., where he died Dec. 8, 1885. Of the line of Conrad, 3d, came the Snyder county Weisers, a number of whom have climbed into fame as editors, authors, legislators and professional men. The last noted minister was the late Rev. Daniel Weiser, D. D., long a prominent minister of the Lutheran Church, who died at Selinsgrove Dec. 9, 1875.

## ORATOR AND AUTHOR.

Daniel Weiser, the fourth son of John Conrad (3d), had a son, Clement Z., who was destined to become widely known as one of the most eloquent and influential ministers in the Reformed Church, Rev. Dr. C. Z. Weiser, of Pennsburg, where he long preached and died. He held highest offices in the Reformed Synod, was in demand as a public speaker and a prolific writer. It is from his pen that has come the first "Life of Conrad Weiser," brought out in 1876, by Daniel Miller, Reading, publisher.

Peter Weiser, born April 26, 1751, was the second son of Philip. He had four children, one daughter, Catharine, is known to have married a Mr. McConnell. She was born in 1770, survived her father and died in 1852. Nothing more is known to the writer of this branch.

The third of Philip's sons was Jabetz, born in 1753 and died in 1829. He was a farmer and lived on a part of the old homestead, the farm just south of town, now the property of William M. S. Moore, and long the Losh-Moore farm. One of the old buildings still has the name of Jabetz Weiser on as builder. He was married to Marialis Wengert and both of them are buried in our cemetery. He was blind during the last years of his life. It is known that the youngest of their daughters, Elizabeth, born June 16, 1788, was first married to Jacob Fasig, of Womelsdorf, where he died, leaving one son (Arthur) and one daughter Sevilla, besides the widow. Sevilla Sevilla, besides the widow. Sevilla Fasig, born Dec. 25, 1808, baptized

by Rev. Dr. Hendel, confirmed by Rev. Daniel Ulrich, and on her nineteenth birthday was married to Daniel Wolff by Rev. Waltz, from which union comes Oliver J. Wolff, an alderman (still living), of Reading. Mr. Fasig's widow (Elizabeth Weiser), next was married to Henry Lewars, of Hamburg. They had one daughter, Adeline, who married Charles J. Bowers, who is still living at Hamburg—one of the oldest of the Weiser descendants. So are a number of the children. Elizabeth Weiser Lewars died at an advanced age nearly 50 years ago.

Inasmuch as the Lewars name is not a common one, it is more than probable she was ancestress to the late Rev. W. H. Lewars, a Lutheran minister of some note, who served churches at Mahanoy City, Lititz and Annville, where he died in 1897, who was born and brought up near Mohrsville, a few miles south of Hamburg. He was married to Valeria Steck, of Gettysburg, a daughter of Rev. Dr. Daniel Steck. Their three sons were graduated from Gettysburg College and became proficient in music. The eldest, Harold, was married to Elsie Singmaster, famous story writer and authoress, a daughter of Rev. Prof. Singmaster, D. D. LL. D., and wife, he now the president of the Theological Seminary of Gettysburg.

#### **JABETZ WEISER'S CHILDREN.**

Other children of Jabetz Weiser were Marie Catharine, born Nov. 10, 1777; Samuel, born May 19, 1781; Solomon, born Nov. 6, 1783; Henry Solomon, born Feb. 14, 1786; Maria Phillippina, born Nov. 27, 1790; Sarah, born Feb. 15, 1794, and Rebecca, born Feb. 19, 1796. Beyond this we have no record.

4. A fourth son of Philip, was named for the father, Philip. He had the following children: Maria Margaretta, born June 18, 1776; Benjamin, born May 18, 1778; Peter, born Oct. 3, 1781; John Jacob, born March 28, 1783. Nothing is known

to the writer beyond this record. He was probably a posthumous son of his father, Philip.

II. Anna Maria Weiser, the eldest daughter of Conrad, the interpreter, was born in Schohary, N. Y., June 24, 1727. On April 22, 1745, she was married to Rev. Henry Melchoir Muhlenberg, Lutheran superintendent of churches in Pennsylvania and pastor of the Trappe (Augustus) Lutheran Church and others in Montgomery county. Her line of genealogy is completely worked out, as indicated in a former chapter, to the seventh generation. Among this numerous Muhlenberg family are many sons and daughters of distinct fame. We shall try to outline to which of the several branches of this wide-spreading family each noted member belongs and what has brought them renown and honor. Seven children of the 11 born to Rev. Muhlenberg and his wife lived to maturity, married and reared families, in every line of which are illustrious members and offspring. Anna Maria Weiser Muhlenberg lived to a good old age and saw children and grandchildren, like a Queen Victoria, rise and be crowned with honor and fame.

#### **STUDIED FOR MINISTRY.**

Their eldest was Maj. Gen. John Peter Gabriel Muhlenberg, born Oct. 1, 1746, and died Oct. 1, 1807. In 1763 he, with his two younger brothers, was sent to Halle, Germany, where all of them studied for the ministry. He arrived in America in 1767, and in 1768 became assistant pastor of Zion's and St. Paul's Lutheran churches, in New Germantown and Bedminster, N. J. On Nov. 6, 1770, he married Miss Anna Barbara Meyer. In 1772 he became pastor of the Lutheran Church in Woodstock, Va., where, at the outbreak of the Revolutionary War, he made a spectacular resignation of the ministry for army life; took charge as colonel of the Eighth Virginia Regiment, rose to



rank of brigadier general, then to major general, and fought in many of the leading battles during the entire war under Washington's command. After the Revolution he was elected to the Pennsylvania state Legislature; in 1785 was vice president of the Philadelphia Common Council, of which Benjamin Franklin was president; served three terms in Congress (Lower House) and was then elected a United States senator from Pennsylvania. He died at Grays Ferry (Philadelphia) and was buried at Trappe, Montgomery county, near his parents. He left three sons and one daughter out of six children, of whom are:

(a) Hester, married to Isaac Hiestler, of Reading, an eminent physician, of whose children (1) Anna M., married John P. Jones, of Philadelphia, a lawyer; (2) William M., was also a lawyer, and (3), Francis M. (Hiester), a doctor in Reading.

(b) Peter, a major in the U. S. army, who married Sarah Coleman and had four children, of whom (1) Catharine Anna married Rev. Prof. Frederick Augustus Muhlenberg (a second cousin), who was an illustrious educator, professor in four colleges and president of two. They left several children, of whom at least one, W. F. Muhlenberg, was a doctor in Reading; (2) Francis Peter was also an officer in the U. S. army.

(c) Francis Swaine, who married Mary Denny and was a representative in Congress from Ohio.

#### LUTHERAN MINISTER'S WIFE.

The second child of Rev. Henry Melchior and Anna Maria Weiser Muhlenberg was Eva Elizabeth, who married Rev. Christopher Emanuel Schulze, a distinguished Lutheran minister, who was pastor practically all his lifetime of the Tulpehocken charge, residing in the Christ Lutheran parsonage, where their family was born and reared, and where they both died and in the graveyard of which church they lie buried. Rev. Schulze was pastor

when the Union Church, of Womelsdorf, was built and he and his son, John Andrew (afterwards governor), served it for about 15 years after its establishment. From them descended an illustrious family.

(a) Anna Maria Margaretta, married Michael Ege, a Berks county lawyer. Their children were (1), Harriet Ege married John Ermentrout; (2), Sarah Eye married Richard Boone; (3), Michael M. Ege.

(b) Henry L. Schultze, 1774-1824.

(c) John Andrew Melchior Schultze was Lutheran minister, legislator and for two terms governor of Pennsylvania.

(d) Catharine G., 1782-1825.

(e) Christiana Salome, 1783-1853, married John Albright.

(f) Mary Magdalena, 1787-1875.

(g) Frederick Augustus Schultze, 1787-1836, married Mary Rosina Hiester. Their children (1), Julia Ann, married Dr. F. R. McManns, of Baltimore; (2), Emanuel Gabriel, married Frances Elliott.

(3) Eliza M., married Elias Fidler, of Womelsdorf. Their children: (1), Mary Frances, married H. W. Stauffer; (2), Julia, married George H. Valentine; one son, LeRoy H.; (3), Harry, married Fannie S. Smith, three children, Arthur Penn, Julia Eliza and Herbert Smith; (4) Frederick Augustus, married Lizzie H. Valentine; four children, Howard V., Elias Schultze, Frederick Ralph and Adam Claude.

(h) Elizabeth, 1785-1861.

(i) John P. Gabriel, 1786-1840; married Mary Magdalena Immel. Their children are (1) Israel, 1813-1871; (2), Edward Leonard, 1809-1881. Their children: Mary Jane, married Thomas Gotwald, a minister; Phoebe Ann Vutter, married M. J. Grafius Harris; Emma Elizabeth, married John W. Wallace; (3), Lucetta Salmone, married Samuel Schaffer Rex; (4), Clemintine, married Edward Vanderslice.

#### TRAINED FOR MINISTRY.

3. Frederick Augustus Conrad Muhlenberg. Born Jan. 2, 1750, died

June 5, 1801. He was trained in Halle, Germany, for the ministry. Ordained in 1770 and served churches in New Jersey, Lebanon and Lancaster counties (with his home at Schaefferstown), and in New York city to the outbreak of the Revolutionary war, when he also relinquished the ministry for political life. Took a leading part in councils of Pennsylvania in formative period; served several terms in Congress, and was elected first speaker of the U. S. Congress at the beginning of national legislative history. His branch of the family is another illustrious one. On Oct. 15, 1771, **he** was married to Miss Catharine Schaeffer, of Philadelphia, and on their wedding trip—via Reading and Womelsdorf to Schaefferstown—he rode on horseback while his bride rode in the stagecoach, which was too crowded on this trip to accommodate both. From this union were born seven children.

After Rev. Muhlenberg quit his post as pastor in New York city, for the political arena in 1776, he was elected to a seat in Congress from Pennsylvania. He was also elected to the state Legislature in 1780, and chosen its speaker, continuing three terms. Next he filled a place on the board of censors as its president. Then followed the state's ratification of the national constitution, in which Mr. Muhlenberg again was chosen to preside, his brother, Peter, being vice president. It was ratified by Pennsylvania largely through the influence of the two Muhlenbergs. Both the Muhlenbergs were chosen, under its authority to the first United States Congress. Frederick by the Anti-Federal party and Peter on the Federal ticket. He was re-elected to Congress three times. In 1799, Gov. Mifflin appointed him collector general of the Pennsylvania land office and he took up his residence at Lancaster, where the seat of state government was then located. Here he died June 5, 1801, aged 51 years, 5 months and 5 days. John Adams has

this to say of both Frederick and Peter Muhlenberg: "These two Germans, who had been long in public affairs and in high office, were the great leaders and oracles of the whole German interest in Pennsylvania and the neighboring states. The Muhlenbergs turned the whole body of the Germans, great numbers of the Irish, and many of the English, and in this manner introduced the total change that followed in both houses of the Legislature, and in all the executive departments of the national government. Upon such slender threads did our elections then depend."

#### WRITER OF HYMN.

The children and offspring of Frederick A. C. Muhlenberg are as follows: Henry William, born 1772; died, 1805; married, July 30, 1795, Mary Catharine Sheaff, of whom came; Rev. William Augustus Muhlenberg, D. D. (1796-1877), Episcopal minister, father of St. Luke's Hospital and other charitable institutions near New York city; author of the hymn, "I Would Not Live Alway." Mary Catharine Muhlenberg, married John S. Hiester, only son of Gov. Joseph Hiester, a lawyer of Reading, among whose four children was Eugenia Frances Hiester, who married William John Sheaff, whose second daughter, Ellen Frances, became the wife of Gen. David McMurtrie Gregg, of Civil War fame, whose equestrian statue was recently erected in Reading, and whose son by a second marriage (Eugenia F. Hiester to James Murray Rush). Richard Rush, acquired fame in the U. S. navy; Elizabeth Muhlenberg, married John Mifflin Irwin; Margaret Muhlenberg married Jacob Sperry, whose eldest daughter, Mary Elizabeth, married William H. Hart, noted diplomat; Anna Catharine Muhlenberg, who married George Sheaff; Frederick Muhlenberg, single; John Peter David Muhlenberg married Rachael Evans.



4. Margaretta Henrietta Muhlenberg, born 1751 and died 1831, married on July 23, 1771, Rev. John Christopher Kunze, D. D., an eminent Lutheran divine of Philadelphia and New York city, from whose five children sprang an illustrious family of descendants by intermarriage with the Meiers, Van Posts, Schwabs, Schraders, Punnetts, Oakleys, Bulkleys, Cammanns, Wards, Bailleys, Lorillards, of whom besides many prominent merchants of America and Germany (an early branch having married a German merchant), in three generations had the following professional members included: Prominent educators in Germany and America, 3; Charles Theodore Schwab (Stuttgart), John Seile and Rudolph F. A. Schrader (Bielefeld); doctors, 5; Drs. George Philip Cammann, Alfred Smith, Donald M. Cammann, Ernest B. Pauli, Jerome Walker (last two of Bremen); ministers, 4; Revs. Henry Ogden Dubois, Paul Von P. Wantrup, Alfred Plioninger (Stuttgart), Lawrence H. Schwab; lawyers, 2; Eberhart Nolterius and Gustave Herman Von Schwab; navy officers, 3; Charles H. Oakley, Francis Morris, Frederick Paul Schrader, German navy; army officer, 1; Karl George Schwab.

#### MINISTER AND BOTANIST.

5. Gotthilf Henry Ernest Muhlenberg, born 1753 and died 1815. He was for 35 years a distinguished Lutheran minister at Lancaster, and a noted botanist, author of standard books on the science. He, too, like his brothers, was educated at Halle, Germany, and was ordained at Reading in 1770. On July 26, 1774, he was married to Mary Catharine Hall, of Philadelphia, and another illustrious branch of the Muhlenberg family sprang of this union.

Highest honors came to the head during life as minister, educator, scientist and author. Their eight children are as follows:

(a) Mary Catharine, married John Musser.

(b) Susannah Elizabeth, married Peter Schmidt.

(c) Henry Augustus Philip (1782-1844). He was for 25 years pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, Reading; then U. S. congressman for five terms; U. S. minister to Austria (1838), and nominee for governor of Pennsylvania at time of his death (1844). Twice married, sisters, Mary E. and Rebecca, both the daughters of Gov. Joseph Hiester. By his first wife he had six children, of whom one was Hiester Henry, long a noted doctor of Reading, whose son, Nicholas Hunter, also followed the medical profession, and a daughter, Rebecca, married a doctor, viz., Elhannan Zook Schmucker, of Reading, and still another daughter, Rosa, married Rev. H. Douglass Spaeth. Another son was Henry Augustus, who was a lawyer and member of Congress from Pennsylvania, and his son, also named Henry Augustus, likewise followed the practice of law at the Berks county bar. Another son of Henry Augustus Philip and Mary E. Muhlenberg was Frederick Augustus Hall, whose eldest son, Henry Ernest, was a doctor at Lancaster, and his son, by same name, a lawyer at Reading. A second son, Benjamin Schaum Muhlenberg, was a doctor at Lancaster, and a third son was for over 50 years eminent professor of four colleges, minister, president for 11 years of Muhlenberg College, Rev. Frederick Augustus Muhlenberg, D. D., LL. D., already alluded to because married to a second cousin. A fourth son was Francis Muhlenberg, a doctor of Lancaster, and a fifth, Edward D. Muhlenberg, an engraver. One of his daughters, Emma Elizabeth, was married to Rev. Jacob Mombert.

(d) John Philip Emanuel (1784-1825) married Susan A. Craig. No issue.

(e) George Peter Samuel (1786-1827) single.

(f) Mary Henrietta (1789-1850) single.

(g) Phillippa Elizabeth (1791-1823) married Henry Huffnagle. No issue.

(h) Frederick Augustus Holl (1795-1867). Sketch given above.

#### **WIFE OF REVOLUTIONARY GENERAL.**

6. Mary Catharine Muhlenberg (1755-1812) married General Francis Swain, of Revolutionary fame. Had one son, George Washington Swaine. No further issue or descent.

7. Maria Salome Muhlenberg (1766-1827) married Matthias Richards. He was a volunteer at the Battle of Brandywine, later a major in Fourth Battalion, Philadelphia Company Militia, 1780; judge of Berks county courts, 1791-97; inspector of customs, 1801-02; member of Congress, 1807-11; collector of revenues, 1812. Their children were eight, as follows:

(a) Henry Muhlenberg Richards, a surveyor, married Elizabeth Otto. Had one son and descent.

(b) Mary Catharine Richards, married Isaac Myers. Had one daughter. No descent.

(c) Matthias Swaine Richards, married Margaret Myers. Had two children, but no descent.

(d) Margaretta Henrietta Richards. Single.

(e) Charles Richards, a lawyer at Lebanon. Single.

(f) Eliza Salome Richards, married James F. McElroy, of U. S. army. No issue.

(g) Charlotte Francisca Richards, married George W. Oakley, a merchant, of Reading. Had two children and descent.

(h) John William Richards, a noted Lutheran minister of Pennsylvania, who married Andova Garber. They had four children as follows: (1), Adalaide Susanna, married Jacques Von B. Beck Craig. No issue. (2), Andora Elizabeth, married John McKnight, merchant, of Reading. Had four children and descent. (3), Matthias Henry Richards, a Lutheran minister, college professor,

lecturer and author. Married Sarah M. McClean. Of their four children, the eldest son, Rev. John W. Richards, became pastor of a Lutheran church in Lancaster, and their daughter, Mary McConaughy, married David Reeves Stockton, a doctor of Lancaster. (4), Henry Melchoir Muhlenberg Richards, naval officer, historian and author, of Lebanon, married Ella Van Leer, and of their four children, the eldest is Rev. Henry Branson Richards, of the Lutheran Church, and the second son, Charles Matthias, followed the medical profession in Reading.

III. Frederick Weiser, third son of the interpreter, Conrad Weiser, was born in Schoharie, N. Y., Dec. 24, 1728. His name comes up only occasionally in his father's correspondence and later during the Revolution, so that we can say practically nothing of his career or his posterity.

IV. Peter Weiser was the fourth branch of the Conrad Weiser family. The few fragments known of him are included in the father's correspondence, and when his name occurs in muster rolls of the Revolution. It may afford the subject for some future study to unravel these lives. But doubtless the many scattered Weisers of Berks, Montgomery, Lancaster, York, Snyder and other counties of Pennsylvania may be able to trace their ancestry to one or the other line.

#### **DESCENDANTS OF WEISER.**

When the Conrad Weiser monument was unveiled in Womelsdorf, Sept. 25, 1909, there were present a number of direct descendants, among whom Mrs. William Bailey, of Washington, D. C., claims to be a great-great-granddaughter of Peter. She is a member of the D. A. R. and Colonial Dames Society and was corresponding secretary of Columbia Chapter, D. A. R., of Washington. Likewise, Mrs. W. H. Morrette and Miss Ida McConnell, of Philadelphia, also present, claim the same relation to Peter



Weiser and, of course, his father, Conrad. George Weiser, of Middletown, O., was also present and claimed direct descent from the pioneer. He is a veteran of the Civil War. Other descendants present were Mrs. Ida Kredell, Miss Ella Shearer and Mamie Warren, of Reading; Mr. and Mrs. Victor J. Larsen, of Harrisburg; Mrs. Ida Smeltzer, of Myerstown; Mrs. Annie E. Leisenring, of Allentown, deputy state factory inspector; Mrs. Frances Robinson, of Pinegrove, who was Miss McConnell, a daughter of Frederick McConnell, who was a son of Robert McConnell, who was married to Catharine Weiser, a daughter of Peter Weiser, the son of Conrad Weiser. The tangle may yet be unraveled.

V. Margaret Weiser, was born here in the Weiser homestead Jan. 28, 1734. She was twice married; first to Hieronymus Heintzleman. They had at least one son, Israel, mentioned in Conrad Weiser's will, while the mother was a widow. Possibly a second son was born, as the name would indicate, John Conrad Heintzleman. He lies buried at Manheim Lutheran cemetery. His brother, Peter, the father of Gen. S. P. Heintzleman, of Civil War fame, is also buried here. But it is still conjectural if these are the offspring of Margaret Weiser Heintzleman. The second marriage was with a Mr. Finker. But of their family, if any, we are equally uncertain.

#### ALSO AN INTERPRETER.

VI. SAMUEL WEISER is often mentioned in his father's letters and commonly called Sammy. He was sent on many public errands by his father, had partly mastered the Indian tongue and tried to follow in his father's footsteps as interpreter, but soon the occasion for it passed away and he dropped out of the political

lime light. We know nothing of his family.

VII. BENJAMIN WEISER, born Aug. 12, 1744, the youngest son of Conrad, seems to have inherited his father's roving propensity. After the Revolutionary War he was in Snyder county; then he pursued a phantom of reclaiming his father's lands in the Mohawk country; thence he traveled to New England, as appears from a letter to Gov. Simon Snyder, dated April 2, 1788. We quote: "Since I saw you last I saw a good deal of the world (that is, different sorts of people). I was last summer at Mohawk River, but could not get matters settled to my mind. I might have gotten a considerable sum for my right, though. I shall now, in a few days set off again and am sure of having it done pretty nigh to my satisfaction." This letter was written from Providence, R. I. We must leave the elaboration of his family tree to some future time, or some other hands.

We have given a hasty view of this illustrious family of Conrad Weiser and their progeny. Without going down for famous members beyond about the fourth generation, except in a few instances, and not mentioning successful merchants and manufacturers and men of affairs in general, we have come across poets and orators, artists and engravers, painters and sculptors and architects and at least 22 ministers, 17 doctors, 10 lawyers, 8 military men, 5 state legislators, 5 college professors, 1 college president, 4 men rating high in the naval service, 7 congressmen, 1 U. S. senator, 1 governor, 2 wives of governors, 1 candidate for governor, who died during the campaign, and two judges of court. Certainly quite an array of leading and professional men and entitling our humble Tulpehocken pioneer family of 200 years ago to the distinctive honor of being the "most illustrious."



**"Let's Go and Play!"**



## Chapter XXI.

### A VAST AND VARIED PLAYGROUND

Womelsdorf is environed with such a variety of natural attractions that whosoever, among its dwellers is not constantly finding recreation near at hand is either sick or has no means, or will of locomotion. And to enjoy these attractions one need not own an automobile, or horse and buggy; no, not even a bike. They lie so close at hand that any good hiker can reach the outermost of them on a holiday, or even after a summer day's work is done, especially if he works on the daylight saving schedule.

And walking is by far the most exhilarating and profitable form of locomotion. With a good companion there is nothing to take the place of God's own provision for one's own propulsion over His terrestrial footstool, man's earthly house of many wonders. If it does not rival other modes of travel in speed and bodily ease, it greatly excels all others in general physical exercise and mental exhilaration, while it leads to those hidden springs of refreshment and those peaks of observation and mental inspiration where frequently no other mode of conveyance can carry you. It finds its pathways lined with gems of beauty and objects of interest, which are revealed to no one but the pedestrian.

#### BEAUTIFUL AND VARIED.

Womelsdorf is surrounded by very beautiful, but quite varied landscapes. It has meadows through which babbling water courses meander and whose banks are bespangled with a vast variety of spring blossoms. It has rolling uplands which have a peculiar attraction all their own. Berks county in its western portion is remarkably broken up into a countless number of hills and dales. The three Heidelbergs must have borrowed some of the broken country sites of their European namesake. It resembles the rolling hillsides of some of the contour of Switzerland and the Palatinate. Indeed, an extensive traveler in these sections of Europe once took a back road drive from Womelsdorf to Reading over

the intervening rolling Heidelberg hills and remarked that he had seen nothing in America that so reminded him of the Swiss hills and dales.

By the way, those early Tulpehocken settlers must have seen the same resemblance and therefore so named these townships of Berks. For the early settlers named the most of the original townships of Berks (Heidelberg, Berne, Alsace, Albany, Cumru, Caernarvon), while the English proprietaries named the earlier counties of Pennsylvania for their English shires (Chester, Bucks, Lancaster, Berks, York, Cumberland, Northampton), while the aborigines had already given Indian names to the mountain ranges and streams along which they led their wild life (Kittatinny, Lecha, Manatawny, Ontelaunee, Tulpehocken, Quittapahilla, Swatara).

#### RESEMBLES HUGE TABLE.

The surface of the Heidelbergs for many miles square resembles a huge table upon which have been laid close together inverted spheres of mush-melons or pumpkins cut in half. Between the concave hillocks lie the dells, bountifully supplied with springs of water, near which the original homesteads were built, and through which ravines run the winding roadways. New roads are now frequently laid out over these boundless succession of hills and dales so as to afford the traveler constant surprises of beauteous bits of scenery, and frequently from some hilltop most extensive and charming stretches of rolling landscape. There is similarity in these winding and undulating highways, but there is constant variety as well. One never wearies at the pleasing turns and vistas thus presented.

Through the wider valleys the more significant streams take their meandering course to the river and the sea. The Spring Creek passes Robesonia, the Cacoosing seeks the larger Tulpehocken, as it flows from the Southern Mountains between Wernersville and Sinking Spring. The Northkill rises in the Northern

or Blue Mountains and flows into the Tulpehocken at Bernville, while the Mill Creek has its source in the Swabian Hills to the south of old Schaefferstown and empties into the Tulpehocken about a mile west of Womelsdorf. Thus the much fed and swollen Tulpehocken drains all this section of western Berks, flows half a mile to the north of Womelsdorf, and after pushing its way in a serpentine fashion along the northern borders of the hilly Heidelbergsgs empties its waters at Reading into the Schuylkill River, which, with its larger companion, the Delaware, carries these hilly spring floods on to the great sea. All these local streams are stocked with fish and have for generations afforded recreation and sport to the disciples of Izaak Walton.

### TRAVEL A PLEASURE.

As the roads are very good in all these little valleys, they afford excellent travel for any mode of conveyance, during all parts of the year. And for bits of charming pastoral scenery, we venture the assertion that Central and Fairmount parks of New York and Philadelphia, cannot compare with the Mill Creek and Tulpehocken Valley drives. The unparalleled William Penn Highway runs through the town and the very heart of the valley.

But the real playground of Womelsdorf is the vast South Mountain backbone, whose base stretches but one-half of a mile to the south of the town limits, lying in a south-westerly direction, and reaches its highest crest directly south of town, where Eagle's Peak looks perpetually down upon the expansive Lebanon Valley from its lofty eyrie of over 1,100 feet. This northern slope is composed of several vast terraces, or benches, over which numerous trails, paths and woodmen's wagon roads lead. The ascent is thus made easily. In its side numerous springs abound and give forth their ice cold water, among which the Bethany Orphans' Home Spring and the Gold Spring of the "Kluft" are the most famous.

To stroll leisurely over this broad mountain side, or parts of it, in any season of the year, is more profitable physically than the best equipped gymnasium, and mentally more beneficial possibly, than the best of museums, the Smithsonian of Washington, or the American Museum of Natural History of New York not even excepted. For here is the home and harbor of the real, the living things of which the museums contain only the original

skeletons, or the pressed, the stuffed and the painted specimens. If one goes in early Spring, the arbutus, the anemone, the violet and the hypatica will keep him company. If he goes in May the wild azalea, the May apple and the laurel will adorn his pathway. If he goes a little later the orchids of different varieties, especially the pink and yellow lady slippers, abound and charm his heart as no pressed flower of the museum can do. In July he goes berrying and brings home kettles full of raspberries, blackberries and huckleberries.

### THE CALL OF THE WILD.

But all the while he is surrounded by the wild and semi-wild creatures of God, whose home and habitat are the forest and the mountains. The birds, of course, are most plentiful, unless one counts the ants, the bees and the many tribes of gnats and flies. It is seldom that one strolls through the mountain paths in spring, summer or autumn and does not see a dozen varieties of birds and hear their musical notes. The thrushes, warblers, chewinks and sparrows seem to be most common. Not infrequently one can hear the drum of the pheasant and the piping of the quail, or be thrilled, as he is suddenly startled a few steps before him by the flight and flutter of their whirring wings. Sometimes the pedestrian comes upon the trail of the fox, or the mink and raccoon. The squirrel and chipmunks are everywhere in evidence, and all these, together with the rabbit and the wild turkey make this mountain range a desirable field for the hunter.

Thus is furnished to the dwellers of the valley, of farm or village, a field of refreshment and recreation that covers tens of thousands of acres and lures the nature-lover, the sportsman and the seekers of rest and health to an Elysian playground. At Wernersville, six miles to the east, health and rest seekers have for two generations found an invaluable asset in this same range of hills, and now more than half a dozen hotels and health resorts have sprung up and established a wide fame.

At Mt. Gretna, 15 miles to the southwest, the Pennsylvania chautauqua and camp-meeting grounds have for long years attracted the seekers after mental and spiritual recreation. Now the state and national military camp grounds have made this plateau a drill ground for the military arm of our government. As a summer resort it attracts



annually about 3,000 dwellers to the prettily set cottages that adorn its grounds, in addition to the thousands of military campers. All receive their benefit from this vast playground.

### GOD'S HANDIWORK.

But perhaps the meditative student of nature, the lover of the things and ways of God in His world of primitive natural workmanship, finds the greatest joy and learns the deepest lessons as he strolls leisurely and in reflective solitude, beholding the creations of God's hand. As he gets the fragrant whiff of the wild grape blossom or the honeysuckle, he instinctively and audibly calls on God, for he knows that God is there, and in His first temple is receiving oblations of His own creation, sweeter than the aromatic incense of ancient Jewish altars. He is prepared to take his shoes from off his feet, for he knows he is treading on holy ground. With the thrush song, or the piccolo notes of the vireo, may be wakened a song in his own heart and tongue, as he tunelessly repeats the lines of that grateful old hymn:

"Praise the Lord! ye heavens adore Him,  
Praise Him, angels of the height;  
Sun and moon reprove before Him,  
Praise Him, all ye stars of light.

"Praise the God of our salvation,  
Hosts on high His power proclaim;  
Heaven and earth, and all creation,  
Laud and magnify His name?"

Or he may, in a mood of personal spiritual fellowship, sing forth that other hymn of praise to Christ by Ray Palmer:

"Jesus, these eyes have never seen  
That radiant form of Thine;  
The veil of sense hangs hard between  
Thy blessed face and mine.  
I see Thee not, I hear Thee not,  
Yet art Thou oft with me;  
And earth has ne'er so dear a spot,  
As where I meet with Thee."

### REAL INSPIRATION.

All these refreshments come to mind and body as one revels in this mighty, God-provided playground for the dwellers of the valley in general and the inhabitants of Womelsdorf and its environing villages, in particular. But real inspiration awaits him who climbs the almost precipitous rocky Eagles' Peak, the highest elevation, and from its towering crest looks over this matchless panorama of rural, pastoral land-

scape. The northern view is so extensive that it embraces virtually the eastern half of the famous Lebanon valley and includes vast stretches beyond. One looks to the east and west, to the north and south, and goes into rapturous exclamations over the magnificent country that lies beneath him. Above the din of the valley's noises, its enrapturing beauty and boundless magnificence transport his soul. Once seen, the picture is forever photographed upon the sensitive plate of his soul.

Here stretches an empire of fertile farms. On and on the billowy fields are rolling, clad in their wealth of emerald beauty. On and on the terrestrial billows of this farm-sea are flowing, one farm lashing against another, until 15 miles to the north it strikes against its Blue Mountain promontory, while to the south this agricultural sea breaks itself up in green undulations of woodland against the spurs of our South Mountain range.

### FERTILE ACRES.

What rich and improved acres these German pioneers of the Tulpehocken valley have left as a legacy for their sons and descendant heirs. Their log cabins have in most instances been displaced by commodious stone farm houses, many of them so large and so palatial that their domestic comfort and surrounding attractions lure the most fastidious.

And what barns! No community on earth can boast of finer and larger barns than these "Schweitzers" of these Tulpehocken valley, Pennsylvania German, georgic princes! And faith, they need them. Such are the yields of their broad acres under their scientific skill at agriculture that these gigantic storehouses of crops often overflow with the farm products, and rows of hive-shaped stacks of grain and hay and corn fodder, have to be set nearby, as so many sentinels, as it were, to guard the rich farm treasures.

Hence the dwellers of Womelsdorf need not seek for recreation at some distant and expensive seaside resort, for they have the best of air, the purest of water, the most attractive of landscapes, the most charming views of scenic beauty and the most varied and extensive playground right at hand. "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about His people from henceforth even forevermore."

**GOD'S MOUNTAINS.**

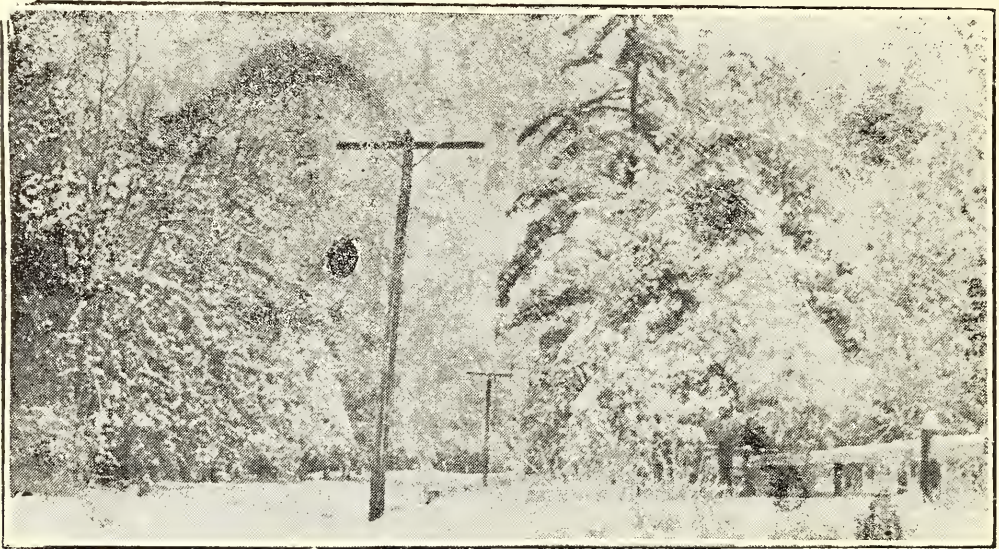
Oh! the mountains of God's hand, how they charm my soul! And I have been richly favored by their Creator in granting me the privilege of seeing many of those of our own land. My infancy was cradled between the Blue Ridge and the South Mountain ranges. In early youth I journeyed over the plateau of the Poconos and the Broad mountains of Pennsylvania. During my college and seminary years I had constantly framed in my room windows Culp's Hill and the two Round Tops of the great battlefield of Gettysburg. In my later travels it was my rare privilege to cross the Alleghenies a score of times, both the

and worshipped with William Tell for a week among the White Mountains of New Hampshire and, with a part of my family, ascended Mt. Washington and apostrophized with him among the vast sloping wildernesses of pines, the immortal pines of those hills, by crying out:

"Ye crags and peaks! I'm with you once again,  
To hold to you the hands that still are free."

**LURE OF THE HILLS.**

I have lived for over 12 years on the prairies of Illinois, and despite happy surroundings and the subtle charm and lure of the prairies, and



**A Winter Scene**

Rocky and the Sierra Nevada ranges, with their perpetually snow-covered guarding sentinels, and to ramble among the Wyoming and Yellowstone Park peaks and spouting geysers.

I have been in the foothills of the Ozarks and looked out upon the Smoky Mountains of North Carolina from that matchless watch tower of Lookout Mountain, by the southern gates of Chattanooga, Tenn., where the "Battle Above the Clouds" was fought. I have gone by the Catskills of New York, made famous in song and story by the ablest writers of fine English in America, and have touched the great Adirondacks by the hem of its garments as I traveled from Albany to Montreal by the route of Lakes George and Champlain. I have seen from afar the towering bulges of the Green Mountains of Vermont, and reveled

dearest of friends and associations environing me and my family, I nursed a secret home-sickness for the hills all these years, that drove me to Pennsylvania half a dozen times for cure and finally took me back permanently to live among the Keystone hills and spend the evening time of life looking upon their beauty and receiving their benedictive caresses and consolations, while my heart sings out:

"For the strength of the hills we bless Thee,  
Oh! God, our father's God!"

Or with the psalmist to say: "I will look unto the hills, whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, who made the heavens and the earth."

And so the dear Father has set a little vest pocket edition of a mountain in my study window at Womelsdorf to entertain, to solace, to teach,



to inspire, to amuse and to glorify our souls, while slowly the evening shadows are gathering. It is playground and picture gallery, school room and lecture hall, observation tower and preacher's pulpit, recreation gymnasium and amusement stage all in one.

### MINIATURE MT. BLANC.

It is my miniature Mt. Blanc, a little over 1,100 feet high. It is just a mile away from my window and a segment of it, five miles long, stretching from the "Kluft" of New-mantown, where the Gold Spring sends forth its ice cold beverage, to the ravine at Robesonia, where the Furnace, or Spring Creek, has its rise, has been set in this window frame. Eagle's Peak is just before me, its rocky eyrie now battling with the lightning flashes of summer storms, or playing with the clouds, or else basking itself in clear sunlight, or looking up into a blue sky. While its summit is thus engaged in its frisky moods, hundreds of orphaned children play innocently at its flowery base. Its friendly terraced bosom is ever exposed to view, upon whose vast pillows all of Berks' 250,000 toiling inhabitants might find rest and be enfolded in its arboreal skirts, and hidden from view, like a sleeping infant rests on the bosom of its mother.

Ah, the solacing, inspiring, bewitching, entrancing charms of a mountain with its varying moods! Yes, a mountain has moods, like a spoiled child or an ill-trained man. It is about the moodiest thing on earth. Recreationists know it and watch the varying freaks in all mountains, as dwellers by the sea love to watch the ocean's changing caprices.

### MOUNTAIN'S MOODS.

I have often watched my pet mountain's capers and moods. Now its disposition is merry and playful, like a skipping lamb. Now it lends its benignant smiles and dotes upon you like a love-sick maiden. Now it challenges you like a defiant warrior, or a gladiator in his fighting uniform. Now it frowns upon you; it fairly froths like a wild beast in rage.

And it changes its color much like a chameleon. It has a different garb for each season and some extra wraps to suit all kinds of weather. Now it steps out in tenderest green of spring's loveliness. The budding season gives it a pinkish shawl. The summer months throw upon it a garment of darker green. September often decks it off with a hazy,

gauzy gray veil, while October burnishes it in its autumnal furnaces by day and with the aid of Jack Frost's work by night, it comes forth in all the colors of the rainbow, a gigantic Gypsy show, while as the season's parade moves on it is found in brown and russet, then blue and purple, till winter oft lays about it its mantle of white.

But on the same day it may change both its moods and its colors. Now its aspect is dark and cold and forbidding. It seems far away. Gray clouds may wrap a somber coverlet about its summit and it stands out unmoved and irresponsible like a sulking, disappointed lover. Then its mood changes. A sheen of morning sunlight steals over its face. It wakens into love and friendliness. It casts away its somber robes and clothes itself in pink and beams upon you with a tender, beckoning smile, and as if conscious of being discovered in its love-making, it turns into crimson like the blushing cheek of a bashful sweetheart. I have seen it turn, within a few minutes, from a petulant, frowning, soured maiden into a rose garden of brilliant blooms by the effusion of copious baptisms of sun-rays upon its countenance. I have seen it stand forth, curtained in thin, filmy tracery of misty white clouds, as after a rain shower, when its form could only be dimly seen behind its pure white diaphanous veil.

### LIKE AN ANGRY BISON.

Now it seems near. It comes to meet you with a confident step and glad eye, like a tamed fawn that comes to lick your hand or eat from its outstretched palm. Then it recedes like a frightened deer and hides from you, as it were. It stands afar off, cold and angry, like a huge bison shaking its furry head. It seems to shake its giant form like an unsheltered beast in a rain storm.

Alas! Once I saw it enveloped in flames! It had turned into a miniature Vesuvius. It was during the early days of May, 1922. Some careless person had recklessly dropped a lighted match, or played with a bonfire, when its whole surface was strewn with its winter bedding of leaves, dried into a cinder bed by an incessant April sun shining from a cloudless, rainless sky. A gentle wind gave it both feet and wings, and the little flame soon had leaped from base to crest, and as if horrified at its own mischief or the charred surface it left behind, it divided itself into two columns and

kept receding, one from the other, like two columns of soldiers marching backward on dress parade. It was a weird, a lurid sight to see these two fire battalions of the mountain keeping up their uncanny counter-marches all night. Like great fiery serpents they stretched their serpentine lengths against the entire sides of the steep inclines, like two meandering streams of lava from some volcano, these twin, ever-widening, ever-receding fire streams, rolled down the mountain sides all night. A thousand fire fighters turned these forest heights, this vast playground, into the busiest workshop ever, as melting hot as a rolling-mill, for two days and nights. It left a surface of 3,000 acres of it charred and black. It took the greatest nurse—dear old Dame Nature—all summer to heal the gigantic wound.

#### **BATHED IN SUNLIGHT.**

But here it is in my window every morning in some mood or color. I have watched it again and again, when the atmospheric conditions made it look terribly like some angered Blue Beard, or when a stream of sunlight would bathe just the tips of the trees, perhaps when they stood in their autumnal colors and veritably it excelled all the finest exhibitions of art on screen or canvas that I ever saw in picture theatres or metropolitan museums of art. Such displays are more like the apocalyptic vision, of the heavenly highway to glory, with its golden pavement and pearly gates, shimmering in the brilliant light that issues forth from God's throne, than anything I ever beheld on earth. It is marvelously, transportingly beautiful to behold. Ah! the mountain is my moving picture-show. It plays for me every day and unwinds its ever-varying films, unrolling indescribable panoramas of

glory before my eyes. And it charges me nothing but an open eye, an appreciative heart and an adoring soul. I always manage to pay the price.

True, the mountain has some high and precipitous rocky ledges; I know, for I have climbed them. It has some dense, almost impenetrable thickets of laurel to crawl through; I know, for I have penetrated them. It has some snakes, even rattlesnakes; I know, for I have encountered them. It has some hornets' nests; I know, for I have seen them issue from their papyrus tents, regiments of these Japanese soldiers, each one carrying a quick-firing machine gun, and I battled with them, even if in flight, to their dismay. It has some long, winding lanes; I know, for I have threaded them.

#### **COOLING SPRINGS.**

But it has more than these. It has springs of cooling water. It has roots of medicinal worth. It has teas of spicy tang. It has warmth and welcome in its heart. It has birds and their songs, flowers and their fragrance, cooling shades and their refreshing pines and spruces in immortal colors. It has laurel bushes, green at Thanksgiving and Christmas. It has a voice that calls and lures you to its side, then sings to you of purity, peace and rest. It is better than an apothecary's shop for health. No perfumery bottle can match the odors of the arbutus, the wild azalea, or the fox grape blossom. Its woodsey smells are genuine and beat all the laboratory drugs of the city.

A thousand times has my pet mountain refreshed my body and spirit in some form. Whether I loiter in it, or look upon it from a distance, it is my teacher, my doctor, my lecturer and my entertainer. And it shall remain a part of God's playground for me until play days and work days are over.



even in all these desirable ideals.

As to the matter of health the very physical condition of its loca-

The townspeople have always been moral and religious, maintaining three or four churches.

kept receding, one from the other, like two columns of soldiers marching backward on dress parade. It was a weird, a lurid sight to see these two fire battalions of the mountain keeping up their uncanny counter-marches all night. Like great fiery serpents they stretched their serpentine lengths against the entire sides of the steep inclines, like two meandering streams of lava from some volcano, these twin, ever-widening, ever-receding fire streams, rolled down the mountain sides all night. A thousand fire fighters turned these forest heights, this vast playground, into the busiest workshop ever, as melting hot as a rolling-mill, for two days and nights. It left a surface of 3,000 acres of it charred and black. It took the greatest nurse—dear old Dame Nature—all summer to heal the gigantic wound.

#### **BATHED IN SUNLIGHT.**

But here it is in my window every morning in some mood or color. I have watched it again and again, when the atmospheric conditions made it look terribly like some angered Blue Beard, or when a stream of sunlight would bathe just the tips of the trees, perhaps when they stood in their autumnal colors and veritably it excelled all the finest exhibitions of art on screen or canvas that I ever saw in picture theatres or metropolitan museums of art. Such displays are more like the apocalyptic vision, of the heavenly highway to glory, with its golden pavement and pearly gates, shimmering in the brilliant light that issues forth from God's throne, than anything I ever beheld on earth. It is marvelously, transportingly beautiful to behold. Ah! the mountain is my moving picture-show. It plays for me every day and unwinds its ever-varying films, unrolling indescribable panoramas of

glory before my eyes. And it charges me nothing but an open eye, an appreciative heart and an adoring soul. I always manage to pay the price.

True, the mountain has some high and precipitous rocky ledges; I know, for I have climbed them. It has some dense, almost impenetrable thickets of laurel to crawl through; I know, for I have penetrated them. It has some snakes, even rattle-snakes; I know, for I have encountered them. It has some hornets' nests; I know, for I have seen them issue from their papyrus tents, regiments of these Japanese soldiers, each one carrying a quick-firing machine gun, and I battled with them, even if in flight, to their dismay. It has some long, winding lanes; I know, for I have threaded them.

#### **COOLING SPRINGS.**

But it has more than these. It has springs of cooling water. It has roots of medicinal worth. It has teas of spicy tang. It has warmth and welcome in its heart. It has birds and their songs, flowers and their fragrance, cooling shades and their refreshing pines and spruces in immortal colors. It has laurel bushes, green at Thanksgiving and Christmas. It has a voice that calls and lures you to its side, then sings to you of purity, peace and rest. It is better than an apothecary's shop for health. No perfumery bottle can match the odors of the arbutus, the wild azalea, or the fox grape blossom. Its woodsey smells are genuine and beat all the laboratory drugs of the city.

A thousand times has my pet mountain refreshed my body and spirit in some form. Whether I loiter in it, or look upon it from a distance, it is my teacher, my doctor, my lecturer and my entertainer. And it shall remain a part of God's playground for me until play days and work days are over.





View of Womelsdorf, Pa.—Taken from the Northeast

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## Chapter XXII.

## A GOOD PLACE TO LIVE

In speaking of Womelsdorf as a good place to live, the writer has to confess that after living in it for several years in his younger days, he did 40 years ago, leave the place. But it was in no spirit of dissatisfaction over the community, but, as he then believed, and what he later found confirmed, in answer to a beckoning finger of divine Providence. After 40 years of service in the three pleasant and successful fields of pastoral activity of Schuylkill Haven, Lebanon, Pa., and Beardstown, Ill., when the question of retirement from the active ministry was to be solved and the place of future residence had to be settled, the die was mentally cast and the lot fell to our first love—Womelsdorf. He has had enough time and experience since again taking up his abode here, now nearly two years ago, to verify the caption of this last chapter and find for a retired minister that Womelsdorf is actually "a good place to live."

**ESSENTIAL THINGS.**

The essential things in a place of residence to make it desirable and really delightful are health and sanitary conditions, beautiful scenic attractions, moral and intellectual tone, abundance of employment, the spirit of improvement, sociability and neighborliness, conveniences of travel, proximity to large centers of population, where the public library, the art gallery, the musicals and lecture courses abound, and where certain other advantages of culture and refinement and shopping facilities flourish, but from which one can speedily withdraw into the quiet and restful peace of suburban environment.

Womelsdorf answers well to all these requirements or conditions. While in some respects it may not measure up to the very best that can be had, and a certain high and desirable standard may not yet be reached, yet when an average is struck it will be found high up in the grade, and there is an earnest endeavor by many to reach the top notch in all these desirable ideals.

As to the matter of health the very physical condition of its loca-

tion and outlay is its best guaranty. It is located on an undulating slope. Its streets all on an incline and no insanitary deposits or accumulations could possibly lie longer in any place, alley or gutter, than between two rain showers. Every rainstorm is a cleanser to chase dirt from our town. And it does not take much rain to make the street gutters flow full and over. When old Pluvius favors us with a real summer down-pour, this natural purifier and cleanser sweeps every nook and crevice of the town absolutely clean.

This feature of the town was recognized by strangers from larger cities years ago when they repaired hither in summer as an inviting community to spend weeks and months to avoid the stifling heat of other places. The writer cannot recall that any epidemic of any consequence ever visited Womelsdorf.

As to the scenic and natural charms of the community, I have spoken in Chapters I and XXI. Only like King Solomon's glory, "the half has not been told."

**ABOVE THE AVERAGE.**

Concerning the intellectual and moral tone of the community, the presence for long years of a flourishing academy and exceptionally good teachers had brought the intellectual standard possibly a little above the average even a generation ago. Someone has gone to the trouble of making a census and found that out of 1,300 inhabitants (men, women and children included) as many as 153 of its adults have, beyond the high school privileges here, been away and taken an advanced course of study in some college, seminary, normal or technical school of high rank. This is a high percentage. Let the larger cities compare! Besides this Womelsdorf has for some time maintained an itinerant chautauqua and supported during the school term, a high class lecture course that runs during the fall and winter months under the auspices of our schools.

The townspeople have always been moral and religious, maintaining three or four churches.

Church attendance is kept up fairly well, and the battle of our best people is against the things that destroy a community's moral tone. Our churches and Sunday schools are open all the year and many there are who are unwilling to forsake the "old paths." They always find themselves refreshed at the old fountains, when with hungering spirits they repair to the house of God. Our townsfolk are industrious and thrifty and enjoy the fruits of their labor in domestic contentment and peace under their own vine and fig-tree.

#### **CENTER OF CIGAR BUSINESS.**

For employment a number of enterprising businessmen have generally provided work for whosoever wants to labor, whether with hand or brain. Womelsdorf has for years been noted for its cigar industries. Large factories have flourished in the past and generally employed most of the labor. At present the firms of H. F. Fidler & Co., A. S. Valentine & Son, Inc., L. H. Valentine, proprietor, and M. H. Smaltz & Son are running and employing large numbers of men and women.

In the knitting business the Womelsdorf Hosiery Mills, Inc., Harvey Stambach, proprietor, and Harvey Brendle, superintendent; the Vogue Underwear Factory, John Blood, superintendent, and the Dundore Hosiery Mills, William I. Dundore, superintendent, employ many hands. The Williamson & Moyer cigar box factory likewise employs a considerable number of hands. The Lavino Refractories Co., Robert Patterson, superintendent, manufacturing fire brick; the Standard Chemical Co., J. P. Hennesy, president, and Sherman Dietzler, secretary and treasurer, and the coal, cement and lumber yard of W. Theo. Miller, all located at the railroad, employ quite a few hands. Wagner & Emerich are millers; the Rothermel Bros., contractors and builders; Mr. Thompson runs a branch of the Hershey Creamery Co., while Andrew W. Schoener conducts a farmers' implement store.

There are five general stores, whose proprietors are William Strause, Levy S. Filbert, J. D. Kurtz & Son, Amos J. Daub and the Co-Operative Co.; Mr. Daub's is a confectionery and "good eats" store, while Mr. Nolf is in the restaurant business. All these stores employ help. Charles A. Matthew runs a flour and feed store, and John A. Matthew & Son a hardware store, while Dr. F. T. Landis has an up-to-date drug store. Wilson Degler and

Harry W. Schoener are the produce men, and Jacob H. Mays is the head of the Farmers' Fertilizer, Feed and Hide business. W. M. S. Moore, besides farming, continues on a smaller scale the once very flourishing mule dealing business; James Leed and Frank Hoffa are the blacksmiths of town. H. M. Hafer keeps the Seltzer House, bearing a good name as a public hotel. Smaller shops in the artisan line, tanners, plumbers, butchers, barbers, baker, motors, etc., flourish, all of which businesses employ some outside help. These, with the Reading Railway and the two furnaces at Robesonia and Sheridan, keep all our workers well employed. Some of the brands of goods made here have given Womelsdorf extensive advertisement.

#### **WOMAN'S CLUB, READING CIRCLE.**

Taking the matter of sociability into consideration, we would pronounce Womelsdorf at par with the best of small communities. It maintains a good Woman's Club and Reading Circle, has most of the better class of social and fraternal organizations in good running order, and the people are friendly and neighborly, everybody knowing everybody else and no one so selfish or inconsiderate as not to be ready to do a friendly service freely and gladly at any time.

Travel facilities are good, especially eastward, where a branch of the Reading trolley system sends out a car every 40 minutes to Reading and the intervening towns and a car arrives from these points in the same time. The Lebanon Valley branch of the Reading Railway furnishes the town with regular passenger and freight service, and east and west over the William Penn state highway courses a constant stream of traffic in freight trucks and passenger auto-travel all day long. By means of express trains reached by trolley at Wernersville six miles away, Philadelphia is only two hours distant and New York four.

The homes are substantial and convenient, most of them lighted with electricity and supplied with the best of soft water, fresh and clean from the South Mountain Springs. A circulating library on a small scale is started, and anyone eager to consult large city libraries is only 14 miles away from the Reading public library and that of the Historical Society of Berks County. The Reading Museum and Art Gallery are close at hand for the student in these lines of culture.



All these features make Womelsdorf quite a desirable place of residence. Of course the source of true enjoyment abides in a person's own heart and life, and the outside world is attracted or repelled, congenial or repulsive, much as one presents an attitude of friendliness and appreciation, or else of selfishness and hostility. We largely make our own environment. "He that would have friends must show himself friendly."

#### HARDING'S TRIBUTE.

But one can have many things in a small town that go for happiness and self-improvement that often are **hard** to find in a larger place. This may explain why so many men have found the rural life in small towns stepping stones and good schools for their own advancement. We have seen how many noted and successful men and women (and we know we could not name or think of all) have come from Womelsdorf and this community. The rural town is off the college, which a wise and kindly Providence has chosen in which to train many of America's noblest actors. Said President Harding, at the celebration of Gen. Grant's centenary at Point Pleasant, Ohio, last spring: "I have great reverence for the genius and the determination and the capacity which belongs to great cities, but if my observation in life counts for anything, I want to say to you that the one everlasting anchorage of this republic is in the communities like this, in which we are gathered. In the simple life of the hamlet and the village is the typical, sturdy life of our America."

One is almost prepared to say of the small towns of America what Lincoln said of the common people, that God must love them very much, because He made so many of them. There were 12,857 incorporated towns in America in 1920 under 2,500 population. Add to these the unnumbered hamlets and villages that are not incorporated, and when all these are lighted up at night, a nocturnal aeronaut flying high enough must see beneath him in America another firmament, as the heavens above him, studded with stars.

#### HUBBARD'S VERSION.

But Elbert Hubbard, were he living, might dispute the thought that God had anything to do with the making of small towns. His version is that "God made the country, man made the city, but the devil made the small town." Even then a place like Womelsdorf is blest, for there is more of country about it than of

town within it. Even if one might be tempted to think sometimes that his satanic majesty ruled the smaller town, no one would be prepared to assert he did so more than the large city. It was Sodom and Gomorrah, Ninevah and Tyre, Babylon and ancient Rome, Chorazin, Capernaum and even Jerusalem—cities of vast size that were destroyed because of their wickedness.

Sometimes the growing sons and daughters of rural towns grow restive and weary of their native environment, despise the home place for its very littleness and long for the city. Often it is a healthy ambition, and then a small town's best characteristic is that it creates discontent and gives wings to ambition for something greater and bigger than the rural towns offer. Sometime, also, this feeling proves a snare and ends in ruin as with Lot "when he fled from Sodom." Then Harry Lee's poetic reflections may be realized when he sings about

#### MY LITTLE TOWN.

My little town  
Was a green little town  
And a good little town to know,  
With never a door  
But was open to me  
Nor a hearth but was kind  
Long ago.

But a moon-lit road  
Led out of the town  
Over the hills and away;  
Over the hills  
To the wide, wide world.  
Where is the lad  
Could stay?

My little town  
Was a green little town  
And a good little town to know.  
And I would go back  
By that moon-lit road,  
The road that I lost  
Long ago.

—The Independent, Sept. 16, 1922.

And the trouble is in the wanderer's coming back. If even he does not find the "good little town" greatly changed, he will probably discover that he has changed. He will very likely realize what John Burroughs, the great naturalist, has pictured in his fine poem, entitled

#### THE RETURN.

He sought the old scenes with eager feet—  
The scenes he had known as a boy;  
Oh! for a draught of those fountains sweet  
And a taste of that vanished joy.

He roamed the fields, he mused by the streams,  
He threaded the paths and lanes;  
On the hills he sought his youthful dreams,  
In the woods to forget his pains.

Oh! sad, sad hills! oh! cold, cold hearth!  
In sorrow he learned the truth;  
One may go back to the place of his birth,  
He cannot go back to his youth!

So I would say to the young man and woman, born and bred in the country or the rural town. Go, if you must; if an inward spring impels you or a luring vision beckons you, follow your guiding star. But stay, if you can, and be content. Count up the sum and substance of your blessings in hand and make the most of them. And never be ashamed of having been born and reared in the country, or country town. From them have come Washington and Lincoln and most of our great presidents; Gens. Grant and Pershing and scores of other great warriors; Rear Admiral Schley and Drs. Charles H. and William J. Mayo, William S. Sims; John D. Rockefeller, Elbert H. Gary, Thomas A. Edison, Charles N. Schwab, Lyman Abbott, Charles Dana Gibson, John R. Nott, Robert E. Speer, President Harding, Vice-President Coolidge, Herbert Hoover and hundreds of other men and women whose names stand high on fame's muster-roll. To all young men and women living now in Womelsdorf, I would appeal to appreciate our town's bygone history and to help make and keep the place clean and attractive, stimulating and progressive in the best things, and ever strive and labor to make it a desirable place to live in.

### BACK TO OLD NEST.

The writer, after casting about where to take up his residence upon retirement from his public professional labors, settled upon this little town of western Berks. The rabbit, after a long run of 40 years, came back to settle in the old nest. He would like to ever feel that it is a nice place to live in. He hopes to do his "bit" to make and keep it such. We make bold in adding here the "Lines" that were inspired as he trekked back to dear old Pennsylvania after living over 12 years in the younger prairie state, Illinois. After the eastbound express had crossed the boundary line of the Keystone state and its hills and dells (the Alleghenies and the Conemaugh and Juniata valleys) fired the imagination and thrilled the heart, out came the lead pencil and before he reached Harrisburg the margin of his newspaper had this effusion scribbled upon it. With it I shall close my "Annals of Womelsdorf and Community."

### WHERE DOES THE EAST BEGIN?

'Tis where the streams are ever on the rampant;  
'Tis where the hills and dells are well-nigh constant;  
'Tis where it rains at almost any instant;  
There's where the East begins.

Where the abundant earth is skyward looming;  
Where the stacks and chimney-tops are fuming;  
Where the very forest shrubs are blooming;  
There's where the East begins.

'Tis where the hills shut out half-days of sunlight;  
'Tis where some ghost-like huts dance in the moonlight;  
'Tis where the elfin plays each night by starlight;  
There's where the East begins.

Where the streams as well as cheeks are flushing;  
Where the hearts as well as fountains are gushing;  
Where footsteps as well as trains are rushing;  
There's where the East begins.

'Tis where the granite highways wind 'round hillocks;  
'Tis where green meadows all are clad in flower frocks;  
'Tis where there're welcomes back of brazen door-knocks;  
There's where the East begins.

Where acquaintanceships grow friendships royal;  
Where such friendships prove forever loyal;  
Where e'en the billboards urge a baker powder "Royal;"  
There's where the East begins.

'Tis where is preached the good old Gospel sermon;  
Where man and beast still talk in plain Penn-German;  
Since two hundred years ago here settled Hans and Herman;  
There's where the East begins.

Where matrimonial bonds are still all tight-lashed;  
Where garden fences are still all white-washed;  
Where all dark deeds are still all light-smashed;  
There's where the East begins.

'Tis where all gifts are given in heaped-up measure;  
'Tis where all joys are mixed with un'loyed pleasure;  
'Tis where each day brings its own richest treasure;  
There's where the East begins.

And so I'll join the West and East together;  
While Pennsy train welds link in rainy weather;  
And evermore shall heart hold both in tether—  
Here, where the East begins.



## Chapter XXIII.

### ADDENDUM—THE CELEBRATION

The 200th anniversary of the Tulpehocken Settlement, to be commemorated in a four-day celebration at Womelsdorf, Pa., June 28, 29, 30 and July 1, 1923, setting forth in spectacular pageant, parades, marches, music, sermons and addresses:

1. The original settlement of some 70 pioneer families in this valley of the Tulpehocken, between Wernersville on the east and near Myerstown on the west, and from the Summer hills and including Rehrersburg on the north, to the South Mountains and including Newmans-town on the south.

2. The rapidly increasing influx of new emigrants and the building of homes, churches, mills, and other industries during the Colonial period of our national history.

3. The founding and building of town-centers in this territory and the stormy war periods of the French and Indian, and the Revolutionary Wars.

4. The era of progress and development of this section that followed our Colonial Independence and the organization of our National Government.

5. The continuous stream of our checkered local history from the days of Washington to those of President Harding in domestic, school, civic, fraternal and church developments to our present day.

#### THE FOUR DAYS

##### a. Thursday, June 28, School Day

1. Marching, Grave Decorations and Rendition of Historical Pageant by the schools of Womelsdorf and this territory.

2. Addresses and music by select talent.

##### b. Friday, June 29, Pioneer Day

1. Street parade setting forth 200 years of change in modes of travel, kinds of tools and implements and styles of dress.

2. Addresses and music by invited talent.

##### c. Saturday, June 30, Civics and

##### Fraternal Order Day

1. Spectacular Parade with Business Floats, Marching Orders, and Bands of Music.

2. Addresses and music by Special Speakers of wide renown.

##### d. Sunday, July 1, Church Day

1. Festal services in all churches of the territory in the morning.

2. A joint mass service of all congregations and choirs of this district at 2 p. m. in Womelsdorf.

- e. Every evening a musical program of high order, interspersed with brief addresses.

## TULPEHOCKEN BI-CENTENNIAL

(With Apologies to Rudyard Kipling.)

By KRISTOFER KOLUMBO.

If you're off to see your many friends this summer,  
 You sure must take my story for a guide;  
 If you want to meet your business pals, then listen.  
 And you will find you haven't been belied.  
 There's no use hunting for them in their dens and work-shops  
 On th' last three days of June, and first July;  
 For they'll all have gone to celebrate Old Home Week  
 At Womelsdorf; I wouldn't tell a lie!

They'll be there, there, there, with aunts and cousins all;  
 Don't you look for them at Conshohocken;  
 But cast your cares behind, and what I tell you, mind,  
 You'll find them strolling up th' Tulpehocken.

If you want to find your grandsire's moss-grown tombstone,  
 And would like to deck his grave with flowers;—  
 If his name was Reed or Weiser, Schultze, Fischer,  
 Ege, Laucks, or Deppen, Fidler, Showers,—  
 You had better let me give you gentle warning,  
 Than hasten o'er to Greenwood or Fairview,  
 For you'll find him in some Tulpehocken graveyard,  
 Where he has slept a hundred years or two,

His grave is there, there, there; don't waste your precious hours  
 By searching all through olden Shenamocken;  
 And oh! my heavens! don't go to new Charles Evans,  
 For sure your grandsire sleeps in Tulpehocken!

If you'd like to know the hardships and the trials  
 Endured by pioneers in Penn's backwoods,  
 When Redmen prowled about with gory tomahawks,  
 With scalping-knife to take both life and goods;  
 Don't go to Arizona, or to Dakota wild,  
 Nor explore Seattle's great wide wharf;  
 You'll find their bloody footprints near Kittatiny hills,  
 In Tulpehocken-land, near Womelsdorf.

They are there, there, there, those barbaric footprints all,  
 While other homes have ris'n from ashes old;  
 By Northkill's rushing stream their foul deeds may yet be seen,  
 While at Womelsdorf th' tales will all be told.

If you'd spend few summer days renewing friendships,  
 Then shut your office, crank your auto quick;  
 Just join the long procession up Penn's Highway—  
 And don't you let yourself or kin get sick.  
 All roads will lead to Womelsdorf this summer,  
 Where th' story of two hundred years is told;  
 And you can't afford to miss it, you'd be th' only one,  
 So you'd better join the celebrating fold.

The crowds are there, there, there, on every day of four;  
 Don't you think that I am merely mockin'.  
 They'll be looking up old sights and hear of ancient fights,  
 Up at Womelsdorf on th' Tulpehocken.











